Take a Look, Take a Walk by Jan O’Connor, Chair, LWVS Drainage Committee

Each of us lives in a watershed. The Sammamish/Cedar River watershed and the Green/Duwamish River watershed are discussed in the study that appears in this Voter. Seattle’s major watersheds are those of Thornton, Pipers, Taylor and Longfellow Creeks. All of these systems include many smaller streams that empty into the rivers, creeks, lakes or other bodies of water.

There has been a wonderful revival of interest in these streams in recent years as residents and the city have become aware of their ecological importance and their potential as attractive neighborhood assets.

Much attention has been focused on Thornton Creek. Thornton Creek begins as two branches, one flowing from Shoreline’s Ronald Bog and the other from a wetland near North Seattle Community College. The two branches meet near Nathan Hale High School at Meadowbrook Pond, and the water flows from there to Matthews Beach where it empties into Lake Washington. Meadowbrook Pond is a stormwater retention facility created in 1998 at the site of a city sewage plant. It has become a magnet for wildlife and a popular area for walkers. Long guided walks along Thornton Creek are scheduled by the Homewaters Project, www.homewatersproject.org.

Longfellow Creek flows in West Seattle from Roxhill Bog north until it turns and flows into the Duwamish River. When housing at High Point was being redeveloped in the area of the bog, the site was developed as a natural holding area for the water that flows into the creek. Many neighborhood volunteers and the city have participated in restoring the stream and developing a Legacy Trail. The site is further described within the study and is a very interesting place to visit.

The Street Edge Alternative Project, generally referred to as SEA Street, is in the Pipers Creek watershed on Second Avenue NW between NW 117th and 120th streets. It was the first project in which Seattle Public Utilities developed a natural drainage system.

Another site that many of us remember as the blueberry farm is now the Mercer Slough Nature Park, a 320 acre Bellevue park managed in collaboration with the Pacific Science Center. It is easily accessible and offers activities such as hiking, biking and paddling, and educational opportunities.

Your unit members probably can suggest other opportunities to visit locations where efforts are being made to develop natural drainage systems and to restore native habitat.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SEATTLE PROUDLY SPONSORS OUR FIRST CIVICS TRIVIA CONTEST LAUGH, LEARN AND EAT!

THE PUB AT THIRD PLACE, 6504 20TH AVE NE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2009 4:00 PM – DOORS OPEN 4:30 PM – CONTEST STARTS

Enjoy wonderful Greek appetizers and souvlaki as you compete for prizes by pooling your civics wisdom with others. Teams will be formed at The Pub, but you can pick your own team by bringing your friends. A $10 cover fee supports the LWVS. Food and beverages will be billed separately.

Help to make this a successful League event!

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**Mission Statement**

The League of Women Voters of Seattle, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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  - Seattle, WA 98105
  - (206) 622-8961
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  - (202) 429-1965
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President’s Message

By the time you get this Voter we will have a new president and Congress leading our country. President Obama’s much anticipated Inaugural speech will be on YouTube for us to listen to over and over, and on CDs and plaques we will have purchased to put away for our grandchildren. Then the hard work will begin.

As unsettling as this time is, with an uncertain economy and unrest throughout the world, the nation’s mood seems to be hopeful. This is encouraging but also a little worrisome. High expectations can easily lead to frustration. I believe that the League, with our long history of fighting for issues through deliberate use of study and process, is needed more then ever now. We have been through hard times, high hopes and disappointments. We have fought for legislation that failed, only to pick up the fight the next year. We understand the process and how important it is to stay engaged.

It is this history and understanding we need to pass on to the new legions of political activists. To do that we need to demonstrate what it is to be an informed and active participant. We all need to help make the League’s presence known. In the next few months Lindsay and I will try to facilitate getting web access for our forums as podcasts. I also encourage members to view League forums on King County Television—http://www.kingcounty.gov/KCTV.aspx—and to encourage their friends to view them as well.

You, for your part, can check what is happening in your area. Attend a city council hearing or committee meeting. Let us know if there is anything other League members should know about. But also let those you meet know you are with the League and you understand how government works because of the League, our history, our studies and our advocacy.

In the next few weeks our program committee will compile the unit reports from the January planning meetings and come up with a recommendation to be presented at the annual meeting. We will determine our 2009-2010 program from that recommendation. What is to be determined now is who will lead us in accomplishing our ambitious program and core voter service activities for next year. The nominating committee will be meeting soon to select the slate for next year’s board. They are looking for good candidates.

There are many different roles available, some ongoing, some short term, some general, some specific. I encourage you to consider taking one on, whether as a way to hone your leadership skills, to learn more about the League and government, to pay back the League for giving you opportunities, to be mentored by some of the best, to take your turn or just to get involved in doing important work. It is amazing how often as president of the League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS) I meet impressive women who stop to tell me about when they were on the LWVS board. It is a great sorority, and you would fit right in! Joan Thomas is the nominating committee chair; her email is joankthomas23@comcast.net.

In February the League of Women Voters will celebrate its 89th birthday. We will observe that landmark occasion with a League Birthday Party, cosponsored by LWVS and City Councilmember Jean Godden, on February 27 at the Bertha Landes room, Seattle City Hall. This will be a chance for us to thank League member Godden and other LWVS members serving as elected officials, to visit with old friends and to celebrate our august past and exciting future. The invitation is in this Voter and on the web. I hope to see you there.
## February

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<td>League Birthday Party 2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Economics and Taxation Comm. 9:00 a.m.</td>
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### Events
- **February 2**
  - International Relations Committee
  - League Office
- **February 3**
  - Postmark Deadline for Special Election
- **February 5**
  - Forum: Drainage
- **February 7**
  - Board Meeting
- **February 8**
  - Civics Trivia Contest
- **February 9**
  - Civics Education Committee
- **February 10**
  - Transportation Committee
- **February 12**
  - Immigration Committee
- **February 17**
  - Transportation Committee
- **February 27**
  - League Birthday Party
- **February 28**
  - Economics and Taxation Committee

## March

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### Events
- **March 2**
  - Postmark Deadline for Special Election
- **March 5**
  - Civic Education Committee
- **March 10**
  - Civic Education Committee
- **March 12**
  - Immigration Committee
- **March 16**
  - Transportation Committee
- **March 27**
  - Social Justice Committee
- **March 30**
  - Economics and Taxation Committee

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*SEATTLE VOTER FEBRUARY 2009*

*Get To Know League Dinner, 5:30 p.m. / Forum: Women’s Issues, 7:30 p.m.*

*League Lobby Day*
Forum Schedule

The League of Women Voters of Seattle hosts public forums the first Thursday of each month. Upcoming forums are listed below; check the Voter each month for detailed information on the next forum. To find the Voter on the Seattle League website go to www.seattlelwv.org. Click the League library tab on the top banner and you will find the link to the current Voter.

February 5 - Drainage
March 5 - Women's Issues
St. Andrews Church, 2650 148th Ave. SE, Bellevue
April 2 - National Popular Vote
May 7 - Privatization

January Board Briefs By Karen Adair, Secretary

The Board met for a brief meeting on January 10, so that the remainder of the day could be devoted to strategic planning.

Treasurer’s Report
Allison Feher presented the Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual spreadsheet for July through December 2008, and pointed out that we are half way through our fiscal year.

Membership
Our membership total stands at 816. Our PMP dues to LWVUS will be paid at the end of this month, so members who are in arrears are being dropped from our membership lists.

Program
The committee working on February’s Drainage Forum is well organized. Dorothy Sales will organize the March Women’s Issues Forum. A committee is working on the National Popular Vote, a national study, for April. May’s Privatization Study is also going ahead with its work.

Action
At least two Board members will attend the Real Change meeting about the new jail on January 28. The Board is looking for LWVS members interested in serving on a local health committee to track what’s happening locally with health care reform.

Fundraising
The Civics Ed Committee’s Trivia Evening fundraiser will be February 8 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Third Place Books Pub in Ravenna.
Committee Meetings

**International Relations Committee**
Date: Monday, February 2
Time: 12:45-2:45 p.m.
Place: League Office

The topic of discussion is yet to be determined. Email Ellen Berg or Peggy Saari for more information: ellenzberg@msn.com, peggysaari@comcast.net

**Civics Education Committee**
Date: Tuesday, February 10
Time: 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Place: League Office

The Civics Education Committee is running the first LWVS Civics Trivia contest on Feb. 8. At this meeting we will debrief the event and decide what worked well and changes we would like to see for the next time. New members are always welcome. For more information, contact Jaclyn Wall at speakingstrategies@hotmail.com.

**Social Justice Committee**
Date: Tuesday, February 10
Time: 5:30-7:00 p.m.
Place: League Office

Please join us!

**Transportation Committee**
Date: Tuesday, February 21
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Place: League Office

We will discuss ferry issues.

**Land Use Committee**
Date: Saturday, February 28
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Place: 909 E. Newton #D9

For more information, please call Nora Leech at (206) 329-4848.

**Economics and Taxation Committee**
Date: Saturday, February 28
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Place: 909 E. Newton #D9

**Immigration Committee**
Date: Thursday, February 12
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: 3312 E. Republican St.

The Immigration Committee will meet at the home of members Barb Yasui and Bob Hayman for a potluck followed by discussion. Contact Barb Yasui at (206) 329-4848 for directions or questions.

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS), in both its values and practices, affirms its beliefs and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

LWVS recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. LWVS subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that this inclusiveness enhances the organization’s ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs.

LWVS affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of Americans in its membership, board, staff and programs.
HELP WANTED: VOLUNTEER AT THE CIS DESK!

Can you spare bus change and three hours a week? Want to learn how the League works firsthand? Have you been a member for a long time but never had the time to be involved? Now is your chance and have fun at the same time! Volunteer at the Citizen Information Service (CIS) desk on Monday afternoons at the office.

The job entails answering phones and helping with mailings three hours per week from 12:30-3:30 p.m. If you can’t make it for one reason or another, there are substitutes to fill in for you. And we train, so you will be well informed when you take over the job.

Contact Cynthia Howe, CIS Coordinator, at: howe.john@comcast.net or Lindsay at the League office, (206) 329-4848.

THANKS TO PEG WILLIAMS

A BIG thank you to Peg Williams who has served the League wearing many caps, most recently as a long-time volunteer on the CIS desk. She even remembers being on the Board when the CIS was conceived in the 1970s! Now at the age of 89, she has decided to hang up her CIS hat. Who can blame her? She deserves a big thank you and a rest.

We will miss her ever positive, humble presence in the office, and want her to know that the door is always open to her should she just want to drop in to chat with old friends.

Thank you, Peg!

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE TO GET TO KNOW LEAGUE

A casual dinner will be held on Thursday, March 5, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. prior to the forum in celebration of Women’s History Month. The “Get to Know League” dinner is open to all new or prospective members. This forum and dinner will be held at St. Andrews Church in Bellevue. Invitations to the dinner will be mailed the first week of February to those who have joined recently or expressed interest in the League. If you do not receive an invitation and are interested in attending (or know someone who might like to attend) please contact the CIS desk at (206) 329-4848 or email membership@seattlelwv.org.
Save the Date:

We are having a birthday party for the League!

Councilmember Jean Godden and the Seattle LWV

Invite you to join us February 27, 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the
Bertha Landes Room
Seattle City Hall
601 5th Avenue, Seattle

to celebrate 89 remarkable years of the League of Woman Voters making democracy work by encouraging informed and active participation in government.

TUESDAYS WITH GREAT DECISIONS

The League’s Great Decisions 2009 discussion groups will begin in February. The Seattle group will meet on Tuesday, February 10 and will continue to meet every other Tuesday through May 19. The Mercer Island Group will meet on Tuesday evenings at 7:15 beginning February 10. The Issaquah group will meet Sunday evenings beginning March 1 and continuing through May, with dates to be determined by the group.

To order your 2009 GREAT DECISIONS briefing book, call the Foreign Policy Association at 800 477-5836, or order online at www.fpa.org. The price of the books has gone up to $25.00 this year.

Topics include:

The U.S and Rising Powers
Afghanistan and Pakistan

Energy and the Global Economy
The Arctic Age
Egypt: Key Ally in the Middle East
Global Food Crisis
Cuba on the Verge
Human Rights in a New Era: Wars for Peace?

For more information or to sign up for a discussion group call Denise Smith at (206) 329-4848 for the Issaquah Group; Susie Anschell at (206) 329-4848 for the Mercer Island Group; or Carol Goldenberg at (206) 329-4848 for the Seattle group. Vicky Downs will host the Seattle group again this year.

(The December and January VOTERS contain more details on the Foreign Policy Association and the current topics.)
League News

HEALTH CARE AND THE LEAGUE
BY DENISE SMITH, LWVS PRESIDENT

In early December the Office of the President-elect asked Americans to host a Health Care Community Discussion between December 15 and 31 and submit their answers to a series of questions on health care to President-elect Obama’s transition team. This request for public comment came through a notice on their web site, http://change.gov/agenda/health_care_agenda/.

We included this information in the January Voter and the League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS) hosted a Health Care Community Discussion group for anyone unable to attend a local meeting. Six League members attended this meeting and submitted comments. The Issaquah Evening Unit also hosted a discussion group, attended by 17 Issaquah and Sammamish residents and their out-of-state guests. The complexity of the health care services was identified as the biggest problem by far in the health care system. Each group questioned the assumption of employer-based coverage presented in the questions. The Seattle group emphasized the fact that we pay more for health care than 33 other developed countries without covering a significant portion of our population.

The LWVS has had requests to begin a Health Care discussion group to follow the issue at the local, state and national level. We are in the process of determining the interest and leadership available for such a group. Please call or email your interest to us at (206) 329-4848 or info@seattlelwv.org.

A League of Women Voters of the United States Health Care Task Force is currently working on a set of materials to help local and state Leagues with actions with our legislators and in our communities. Check the website, www.lwv.org, (click Members Only) for details.

League of Women Voters of Washington (LWVWA) board member Susan Eidenschink of Tacoma has established a statewide LWVWA Health Care Committee email listserv to facilitate discussion. Email Susan Eidenschink (susaneiden@harbornet.com) for more information.

UPCOMING LWVWA EVENTS

LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION, FEBRUARY 23, 2009
Rotunda, Legislative Building, Olympia
5:00-7:00 p.m.

LEAGUE LOBBY DAY
Columbia Room, Capitol Building, Olympia
March 12

LWVWA CONVENTION
Murano Hotel, Tacoma
May 29-31
The hottest topic—except for the budget—in the 2009 Legislative Session will be public education, specifically the radical changes proposed by the Task Force on Basic Education Finance. The report was released in early January and includes a number of minority reports. Below I have summarized some of the most important elements of the report:

1. The task force supports the Board of Education’s high school graduation requirements (dubbed “Core 24”) in the definition of basic education. This means that students must complete 24 credits to graduate. Currently, many school districts require less. The requirements include more math and science and better reflect what students must take to get into a college. To accomplish this, the state needs to fund six periods in high school, whereas today they fund only five.

2. Basic Education must include preschool for at-risk children. This is the first time that early learning has been seen as critical for future school success. The preschool program would be funded based on the federal Head Start program.

3. There would be specific allocations to fund additional time for English language learners and students with disabilities. In addition, there would be additional time and instruction for struggling students based on the percentage of students in a school who come from families with limited income.

4. One of the more radical proposals is a new teacher compensation system based on three levels—residency, professional, and master teachers. No long would teachers automatically receive pay raises based on more degrees. The report recognizes that quality teaching is the most important investment in education, and it calls for a new system of teacher preparation.

5. Funding would be based on allocation models. For each primary, middle and high school, there would be a model which defines how many teachers, librarians, counselors, principals, etc. are to be funded for a certain number of students. For example, a high school model would be based on 600 students. The model would be adjusted for schools that have more or fewer students. There would also be adjustments for schools with a high number of students from families with limited incomes. This model approach is an effort to make the funding formulas logical and transparent. Currently, the system of funding is complex and not understood by many people.

6. The local school levies and levy equalization system would be revised. Given the new definition of basic education, there is hope that levy funds will, in fact, be used to enhance education, not support what the state should be paying for but currently does not.

All of these changes will take time and money—much more money. The report estimates that it will take six years to fully implement all of the changes.

It is unclear at this time how the legislature and the governor will deal with all the changes proposed by this report. The authors have proposed a comprehensive, and often radically different, approach to defining and funding basic education. Because of that, we may expect extensive discussion and opposition to the recommendations. Stay tuned. I personally think this is a watershed moment in public education and hope League members will pay attention and make their voices heard. It has been over 30 years since the state addressed basic education, so this is the time to get it right for the 21st century.
PUBLIC FINANCING FOR STATE SUPREME COURT ELECTION CAMPAIGNS
BY JEAN CARLSON, LWVS MEMBER

Justice should not be for sale. Our courts must be blind and impartial and never appear to be influenced by campaign contributions from any private special interest.

In the 2009 legislature Washington Public Campaigns (WPC) is submitting legislation to create optional public financing for state supreme court races. We ask our friends in the LWV to ask their representatives to endorse and vote for this program.

The WPC website www.washclean.org has information and links to articles, reports, and data about public funding for judicial campaigns, including a one-page summary of key features and provisions of a proposed judicial bill.

SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES
BY DENISE SMITH, LWVS PRESIDENT

Seattle City Council presented their 2009 priorities at the January 12 council meeting. The Seattle League president and members Nancy Bagley and Virginia Gunby were in the audience. The priorities and report of accomplishments for 2008 can be found at the Seattle City Council website, http://www.cityofseattle.net/council/default.htm.

We encourage members in the 18 jurisdictions outside Seattle to find out the priorities for their local government. As a grassroots organization we encourage government involvement at a local level. City Council committees throughout the area are often recruiting members. This is a great way for League members to influence our communities for the better. These committees are also open for observers, and our Observer Corps offers support and a means to share your observations.

It is not necessary to attend meetings in person in order to observe one. If you go to www.seattle.gov and scroll to the bottom of the page, you will find links to watch City Council meetings live, as well as to the Seattle Channel, Cable Channel 21, which broadcasts City Council briefings and committee meetings live. You will also find a link to the video collection at the Seattle Channel, which contains may archived meetings. The TV schedule is also available on the Seattle Channel site.

If you have questions or need a little encouragement, call the League office at (206) 329-4848.
MEMBERSHIP

Membership Report by Kitty Mahon, Membership Chair

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE LEAGUE –

February 14, 1920 – 2009. From the beginning, 89 years ago to the present, the League has focused on leading issues of the day. As we go forward, the League continues to pursue the topics and issues that impact us all. The upcoming legislative agenda for the national League will focus on Campaign Finance Reform, Civil Liberties, DC Voting Rights, Election Administration, Ethics and Lobbying Reform, Global Climate Change, Health Care Reform and Tax Policy.


It’s the many hands and voices of the League that help to make it work. If the start of a new year, new legislative session, or the celebration of 89 years of the League inspire you to get involved, contact me and I’ll put you in touch with others who share your interest. Also, be sure to check the committee meetings listed each month in the Seattle Voter for the latest on our local issues, and always feel free to attend a meeting and see what’s happening.

IN MEMORIAM

In recent months, we have experienced the loss of several members of the League. The combined knowledge, experience, dedication and commitment to the League and the greater community is immeasurable.

The following excerpt comes from an email the League received from the daughter of Eileen Hambly. She was writing to thank all those who attended her mother’s memorial service and to all Seattle League members:

“Mom would have been “tickled,” as she liked to say, to see the turnout of members. She loved the League and directed her energy there because she was passionate about the work you do to educate and encourage all Americans to use their voting rights to the best possible end. She continues to cheer you on in Heaven, I have no doubt.

“Again, many thanks for all you meant to her and the mission you continue to forge.”

In Memory...

Charles Hale
by Janet Perry

Charles Adams Hale, a long time League member and the husband of member Lenore Hale, died September 29 in Seattle. Charles and Lenore moved to Seattle in 2004. Charles was a distinguished scholar and a retired history professor at the University of Iowa, specializing in the history of liberalism in Mexico in the 19th and early 20th centuries. He wrote several books published in both English and Spanish. In 1993 the Mexican government awarded him the Order of the Águila Azteca, the highest honor given to foreigners for their contributions to Mexican society. His most recent book, Emilio Rabasa and the Survival of Porfirián Liberalism, was published in 2008 by Stanford University Press.
Jo Mahon
by Olive Spannaus

The death of Jo Mahon, early in December, came as a shock to friends in the West Seattle unit. She had missed a few meetings, and in our phone calls we sensed something was amiss, but had no idea the end was so near. If ever there was a person who had it all together, that person was Jo, frankly and uniquely herself. She enjoyed being smartly dressed, all the way from her chic little hats, to her tightly-belted tiny waist, to her dainty and fun footwear. On the dance floor she and Bill cut quite a figure, admired and envied by many. In her civic life no job was too large or too small. She worked as a volunteer with Salvation Army and in the League served several terms as unit leader. With skill and grace she chaired at least one Seattle League Spring Fling, as well as several highly successful unit fundraisers.

It was Jo’s nature to nurture friends and neighbors, especially with home-made soups, other comfort foods and in any other way she could be helpful. Ironically, her nature was such that the rest of us did not have opportunity to “do unto her” in return. We are grateful for this gifted, spunky, sparkling personality and will greatly miss her. We extend heartfelt sympathy to Bill and to their family.

Eileen Hambly
by Jan O’Connor

Eileen Hambly died in December of 2008. Eileen was a mainstay of the North Central unit and the auction committee. I first met her many years ago when I talked to her about school levy issues. As a young mother, Eileen was very active in the PTA and Girl Scouts. Eventually she chaired the city-wide School Levy Campaign and in 1964 was awarded the Educational Achievement Award for Outstanding Service by the Seattle Teachers Association. She told me she felt some of the most competent women working on the levy were members of the League, so she was going to devote her energy to the LWVS.

Before recycling became a city-wide activity, Eileen established Red Rover Recycle. Usually accompanied by Alice Rasp, she picked up recyclable materials in her red pickup. We saved newspapers for her at Madrona School, as did many regular contributors. One year she invited family and friends to join her in Pioneer Square after the Fat Tuesday celebration to collect aluminum cans. That was an experience! We loved her on the auction committee. Always there, but didn’t want to waste time debating policies. She was fearless in making contacts for contributions and was seldom denied. She was an equally active unit member. Always smiling, always well prepared for unit meetings, always promoting the League and enthusiastically welcoming new members. She and Jane Brown, another unit activist, were awarded the LWVS first Carrie Chapman Catt Award in 1993.

As she aged, she moved from her house in the University District to a cooperative housing unit and then to an apartment in Ballard. Sandy Barney often picked her up to attend the North Central meetings. After major heart surgery in the 1990s, she moved to the Norse Home where she lived for thirteen years. She was active at the Norse and was pictured on a postcard featuring residents listening to school children read. During later years she was active in groups dedicated to the causes of peace and justice.

She came to the unit for her 90th birthday in 2004, and we all enjoyed some cake in her honor.
Mary Frances Aldrich
By Jan O’Connor

Mary Frances Aldrich, another fifty-year member, also died in December of 2008.

Mary Frances Aldrich did not tread lightly through life or the League. She taught English at Seattle Central Community College, where she helped many foreign students, made many interesting contacts and became involved in local politics and international relations.

She wrote a monthly column for the Voter that was often controversial. When attendees at national conventions learned we were from Seattle, they usually had comments or questions about Mary Frances’ articles.

Mary Frances was a hard working, affable League member. She was a member of the Magnolia/Queen Anne unit and a board member for years. Her grasp of the English language served us well. Her home on Magnolia with its incredible view of downtown Seattle was a favorite site for meetings of all kinds: the unit, committees, board retreats and fundraisers.

As International Relations chair, she was a challenge. The presidents of the era insisted that she work through an International Relations Committee, a committee that continues to the present. We hosted international visitors who enriched our program. I remember talking with two women from Liberia, one a Christian and one a Muslim, who told us about the role of women in their local markets. But some visitors brought challenges with them. One of them copied hundreds of pages of material and wanted the League to mail it to her. The postage bill was not in anyone’s budget.

Once Mary rather impetuously took off for Zimbabwe without all the required paperwork. She was forced to stay in close quarters in Zimbabwe for three weeks with a host who did not want her there. (The League did not encourage or pay for this trip.) Her stories after she finally returned home were good for a lifetime.

Mary was also active politically and felt strongly that the funds used to pay for wars and defense should be devoted to better purposes. She led a study devoted to that effort. In her later years Mary was challenged by poor health and gradually withdrew from League activities. She received the Carrie Chapman Catt award in 1997.

Elinor Akers Buchwach
By Jan O’Connor

Elinor Akers Buchwach, also a long time member, died on December 10, 2008.

Elinor Buchwach was a fellow teacher noted for her quick wit and casual approach to keeping a calendar. She told me she wanted to join the League and I questioned whether it was her kind of organization. But she signed up and was a faithful member of the North Central unit for over thirty years. She loved to bake and plied the members with good cookies and boxes of shortbread for the auction. She was always part of the auction set-up crew and in later years brought her granddaughters with her to help. She was part of the group who for several years held their January meeting in Acapulco. Summer travel was her pleasure. Her life was busy with family and friends.

By Steven Johnson

When my daughter sent me this book, it didn’t occur to me that a history about sewers and cholera in 19th century London would read like a detective story. The victims were the hundreds of people who drank water from the Broad St. pump, and the murder weapons included a leaky pipe and cholera germs.

The hero in this book is John Snow, an ambitious physician from a humble family. As a young man, he walked from his native York all the way to London to study medicine. When a dentist named Morton lectured on the anesthetic properties of ether, Snow was quick to learn about them. Soon thereafter he was known in London for his skill using anesthetics. However, few knew he was also a quick-witted and observant sleuth.

When the first deaths from cholera occurred in the summer of 1854, Snow began to prowl the streets and enter homes, interviewing the sick, the dying and the survivors about circumstances surrounding the illness. He wanted to know what the sick had been doing, what they had ingested and when the first symptoms presented themselves. In time, he produced a map showing that virtually all the cholera deaths were associated with water from a particular pump. However, proving the connection turned out to be difficult.

Cholera was well known in Victorian London. Starting with a slightly upset stomach, the first symptom could lead to any number of digestive ailments. However, “vomiting and watery green stools carrying a pungent odor” alerted the patient that he had cholera. This was followed by a “terrible thirst” and “vast quantities of water” being evacuated which contained “tiny white particles.” Throughout the process, sufferers “remained mentally alert until the very last stages” of life. No one guessed that water not only carried the disease but was also the simplest available remedy. Snow noticed that sufferers who drank copious amounts of water sometimes survived.

As in many good detective stories, there are interesting red herrings that turn one’s attention away from important facts. An issue that fascinated me was the strong belief among thoughtful Victorians that “miasma” and “low class life styles” caused disease. Clearly, foul smells wafting from cesspools and sewers as well as from factories and furnaces were unavoidable throughout the poorer areas of the city. This led most citizens to believe that the miasma alone caused illness. Germ theory at the time seemed as improbable as the existence of fairies, but it seemed natural that foul smells indicated contagion and ill health.

Snow’s work eventually led London officials to close the pump that brought up cholera-laden water. In time, his ideas led to the creation of good sewers and a sanitary yet dense living space that defines the great cities. The barriers to making 19th century London sanitary are familiar to us today: ignorance, avoidance of change for personal advantage, insufficient funding, lack of new ideas… the list goes on.

I found this a particularly rewarding read that includes good history and a demonstration of scientific method along with lively storytelling.

The opinions in this review are personal and do not represent those of the LWV.
The Northwest Detention Center (NWDC) was built in Tacoma in 2004 to house immigrant detainees. It is owned and operated by a private company, the GEO Group, under contract to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the federal agency responsible for detention of immigrants during removal proceedings. On July 15, 2008, a group of Seattle University law students and faculty, assisted by staff from OneAmerica (formerly Hate Free Zone), released a report that described alleged human rights violations committed against immigrants detained at the NWDC.

The allegations in this report, which is titled *Voices from Detention: A Report on Human Rights Violations at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington*, were based on interviews carried out over a period of eight months with 41 detainees, one detainee’s wife, and four immigration attorneys. While these sources are not unbiased, the findings in this report have been corroborated to some extent by investigations of numerous detention centers nationwide (including the Tacoma center) that were conducted by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), Homeland Security’s Office of Inspector General (OIG), the American Bar Association, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Human Rights Watch, the Women’s Commission for Refugee and Children and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services.

*Voices from Detention* reported 12 areas of concern in which human rights violations were alleged:

- **Legal Due Process**: Some facility practices, such as unannounced transfers, long waiting times for attorneys to meet their clients, and eavesdropping on conversations with attorneys, create barriers to legal representation.
- **Pressure to Sign Papers**: ICE reportedly pressured detainees to sign voluntary removal orders, written only in English (which many detainees do not understand), without explaining the ramifications of signing.
- **Filing of Grievances**: While grievance procedures exist, detainees complained that grievances are often arbitrarily dismissed, or must be filed with the officer they are complaining about, who may retaliate. ICE itself, in its 2007 review of NWDC, substantiated at least one case of retaliation against a detainee who filed a complaint.
- **Treatment by Officers**: While the report carefully stated that most officers are professional and fair with the detainees, there were complaints that some officers abused their power, sexually harassed detainees, conducted strip searches after attorney visits, and, during a transfer of detainees from Tacoma to Alabama, blocked the use of toilets on the entire seven hour flight.
- **Medical Care**: Emergency medical care was not available during a food poisoning outbreak, despite standards requiring it. Another complaint was that detainees must stand in line (they cannot sit) for hours during sick call.
- **Mental Health Care**: Officers either ignored signs of mental illness or responded to outbursts by detainees by placing the “offender” in solitary confinement.
- **Food**: Besides the one instance of food poisoning that affected at least 300 detainees, food portions in general were inadequate, fresh fruit and vegetables were nonexistent, and while detainees can supplement their diets by buying junk food at the commissary, many detainees have no money or opportunity to earn it (participants in the voluntary work program are paid only $1/day). A doctor told one detainee, who had lost 50 pounds at the NWDC, to stop exercising because he was burning more calories than his diet allowed.
- **Living Quarters**: The Center was built for half the number currently detained;
consequently, bathrooms and showers are inadequate, and privacy is lacking.

- **Visitation:** No physical contact is allowed between detainee and visitors; visiting times have been cut short without explanation; and there is no accommodation and little patience for children.

- **Language Barriers:** The detainee handbook and many other instructions for detainees are available only in English. Voluntary removal forms used to be available in Spanish, but for unexplained reasons, they are now provided only in English.

- **Recreation and Exercise:** An outside yard is available, but only for one hour every other day, and if it’s raining when the detainees go out, they must nonetheless stay outside until their hour is up. Since they have limited clothing, they may end up wearing wet clothing the rest of the day.

- **Telephone Access:** Telephones are expensive and scarce. A GAO review cited significant problems calling consulates, attorneys and the OIG hotline.

***Voices from Detention*** evaluated these conditions against international human rights law, as expressed in such agreements as the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and concluded that they were likely to be violations of those agreements. International human rights law was emphasized because, while national standards for detainee treatment were described in 2001, they were not adopted as laws, and are not legally binding or enforceable. While not explicitly stated in the report, underlying reasons for alleged violations appeared to be as follows:

1) Legislation was enacted in 1996 and 2004 that required detention of large categories of immigrants who previously would not have been detained. The resulting increase in detentions put great strain on facilities that were originally built for fewer people.

2) There is a widespread belief that detainees are criminals, and that detention centers are meant to punish violators. In fact, immigration violations are not criminal offenses, and detention centers are meant to be holding areas until cases are adjudicated, not places of punishment. ICE officials themselves have stated that if detainees don’t like the conditions, they should drop their appeals and leave the U.S., which implies that officials have an incentive to make conditions as unpleasant as possible.

In responding to the allegations in *Voices from Detention*, immigration officials questioned the credibility of using anonymous sources, criticized the report as a “work of fiction” containing “inaccuracies and vague allegations”, claimed that the NWDC meets or exceeds all national standards, and denied ever prohibiting detainees from using bathrooms on any flight. ICE does conduct annual reviews of how well the NWDC complies with national detention standards, and recently hired a consultant to do independent reviews, which have not yet been completed.

The report provided a number of recommendations, the chief of which were that detention standards be formally codified and made legally binding, and that immigrants not be detained unless they pose a flight risk or security threat. According to the report, the cost of detaining all of the immigrants meant to be detained under the 1996 and 2004 laws would be about $100 billion, yet most of these people have not committed crimes. One might question whether this cost exceeds the supposed benefits of enforcing these laws.
The late Mary Frances Aldrich was a longtime League member. Her provocative, lively columns, covering a diverse range of subject matter, appeared monthly in the Seattle Voter for decades. Her pieces were avidly and widely read, as Mary discovered when she attended a National Convention and met Leaguers from across the country familiar with her work.

The following column appeared in the February 1986 edition of the Voter, but many of the underlying themes in her description of geopolitical entanglements and conflict are as timely as ever, as are her insightful reactions.

Arriving home from a recent League committee meeting, I stopped by The Backstage in Ballard to catch the last part of a show sponsored by the Seattle-Managua Sister City Association, featuring Luis Godoy’s salsa band with vocalist Norma Helena Gadea. Godoy is an officer in Nicaragua’s Ministry of Culture and Gadea, a well-known vocalist. The Backstage was filled to capacity with a crowd drawn there as much by its political persuasions as its enthusiasm for the Afro-Latin beat, so it was interracial, inter-age, bilingual, and multi-background. When introducing each salsa dance number, Godoy interjected the political messages that the delighted crowd had come to hear. Among them was his acknowledgement of the important role of women in their revolution. “We couldn’t have done it without them,” he said to loud applause. Then Gadea, in a dramatic and sultry voice, sang “No Pasaran (“They Shall Not Pass”); which I had seen painted on the walls all over Managua, and the atmosphere was electric with the audience and dancers alike clapping in unison, many joining in to chant the slogan. All the fervor, with its underlying sense of frustration and tragedy, mentally catapulted me back to the recent time I had been in Nicaragua. An incident occurred there which seemed slight at the time but was a microcosm of my journey.

We were about fourteen kilometers from the Honduran border on the Nicaraguan side. Bouncing along in the back of an open truck like so many crop-pickers, our group of twenty-one observers from Seattle was in a foreign territory to be sure. We were in the truck because the dirt road was too rough for our tour bus, and we wanted to get to the backcountry to see for ourselves the area where the contras were known to make frequent raids on the local villages and farms. We had passed numerous check points manned by the young soldiers of the Patriotic Defense Forces; we spotted lookout stations on the crests of cliffs and outcroppings, and saw painted wooden crosses along the roadside marking recent casualties of this undeclared war. Sitting on the wooden fencing of our truck was a young soldier escort holding his rifle across his lap, watching the surrounding landscape and probably trying to figure out this group of dislocated charges. We had come from Seattle and other parts of Washington state to see with our own eyes this country so little-known and so much disputed.

“Are you glad you came?” Roberto, one of our Seattle-based escorts, came closer along the gate of the truckbed where I was leaning and questioned me. I turned from gazing at the fields of corn and sugarcane to answer him, but suddenly I knew I couldn’t; the tears were filling my eyes and to talk was impossible. I only looked at him, my mouth trembling and, staring helplessly, I said, “I can’t talk now. Come back later.” He sensed my loss of control and stepped away. Why had I reacted this way? What had affected me that I couldn’t formulate an answer to such a simple direct question? It was as though I had seen the foreign policy of our U.S. State Department in all its impact from the back of a truck in the fields on northern
Nicaragua. Here was a nation in the turmoil of attempting to construct a new government out of the remnants of a bloody revolution and my government was punishing this effort by attacking it. We were hiring mercenaries, the guards of its previous tyrant, as our own surrogate troops. This fertile soil was lying fallow hungering for cultivation with methods we could so simply export, but, instead, we were supplying attacking armies. These people, who for fifty years had been held under Somozan despotism, as we had once experienced despotism, were now trying to create their own new government as we had done 200 year ago, and we were sending destruction and murder. As they stored their harvests, our agents burned the grain silos; as other countries taught them farming skills and sent aid, our hired killers destroyed their crops. Instead of assisting in the formation of a new economy with new hopes, new markets, and new consumers with the prospect of a healthy international trade, we were spending our skills in crushing and killing the efforts of this new body as it struggled to take its place in the community of developing nations. Our ships were mining its harbors in a blockade to destroy its fishing fleets and to deprive the young country from receiving basic necessities. Our government had spent more then $73 million to support the Contra-revolutionaries (the CIA-trained mercenaries) to continue their attacks on farming villages and volunteer troops, boys and girls, young men and women in their teens.

All this I saw from the back of the truck bumping over the dusty road through northern Nicaragua toward the Honduran border where the Contras were hiding. No wonder I couldn’t answer Roberto’s question.

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**Voter Delivery Problems? Let Us Know.**

Some members have informed us that their Voters have been arriving incomplete recently. We hope that we have solved the problem with this issue. Please let us know if your Voter is missing any of its contents, or if you hear of anyone who is still not getting a complete issue.
February Program: Drainage

**Discussion Questions:**

1. (DISCUSSION): Where does runoff from your residence go? How does it reach the nearest waterway? Do you use any practices that handle runoff from your site? Do you need more information?

2. (DISCUSSION): Proposals to protect water quality, manage flooding and/or improve habitat often bring conflict between private property rights and public benefit as well as between the economy and the environment. What should be considered when resolving conflicts? (Examples: private property rights, public benefits, economic interests, a sustainable environment, buyouts, protective zoning.)

**Consensus Questions:**

1. (CONSENSUS): Do you think we should support low impact, minimally intrusive, scientifically based environmental practices? Examples: Best Available Science (BAS), Best Management Practices (BMP), Low Impact Development (LID) and Natural Drainage Systems (NDS).

2. (CONSENSUS): Should cities develop policies, enact legislation and establish a process for stormwater management that protects water quality and habitat, including human habitat?

**Issues Question:**

At the local government level, there may be many drainage problems. If you were making a list of the priority drainage problems with which your local government should deal, what would be your top priority projects? Why?
FOLLOW THE WATER
-A Study of Drainage-

League of Women Voters of Seattle
January, 2009

This study is produced in memory of
Virginia Richmond, an advocate for Seattle shorelines
who devoted much time and many resources to the
League of Women Voters of Seattle.

Study Committee:
Jan O’Connor, chair
Estell Berteig
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Reading Committee:
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Introduction

In the natural environment, the downward course of rainwater is slowed by many features as it moves on its path to the sea. These features include vegetation that breaks the fall of rain and slows its movement, and deep soils in which rainfall may be absorbed as groundwater or move downward through meandering streams into swamps, marshes, and estuaries. As rainwater moves through these paths, it is slowed and, in the process, it is filtered and purified. The resulting wetlands maintain the water table and provide habitat for vegetation and for fish and other native species during the various stages of their lives.

Water becomes a problem when it becomes runoff from eroded agricultural lands and hard surfaces such as paved streets, sidewalks, parking lots and rooftops. This runoff may be rainwater or it may be water from watering gardens or washing cars. This water is a problem because it runs off quickly and carries contaminants with it including the oil and chemicals found on streets, and the fertilizers, pesticides, and weed killers used on lawns, gardens, parks, and golf courses. It may include chemicals used in building materials or for deicing the streets, and the particles shed from tires and brake linings. It may include banned pollutants leaking from old sources or sewage from poorly functioning septic tanks or system overflows during heavy rains.

When these waters run off quickly, the amount and speed of the flow may result in flooding, damage to stream beds and infrastructure, destruction of riparian habitats, damage to properties and the reforming of landscapes. Since these waters have not been slowed or filtered on their way, the contaminants they carry end up in our streams, rivers, lakes and other bodies of water.

Stormwater and wastewater impact the local environment. Governments, environmental groups and individuals are concerned about flooding, threatened species, habitat destruction, and the many pollutants in local waters. The focus of this article is runoff, whether best described as wastewater or stormwater, the history of its management and changing practices in response to evolving research.

Clean Water Is Essential

Clean water is essential for life as we know it. Historically, systems for delivering water to populations were in existence in the Middle East as long as 4,000 years ago. Systems for supplying water were usually followed by systems for disposing of waste and keeping the water supply clean. Lack of communication and scientific knowledge led to crisis after crisis in settled areas throughout the world as residents failed to grasp the dangerous connection between wastes and drinking water.

An abundant and continuing supply of clean fresh water and the responsible disposal of polluted waters remain a worldwide problem. Throughout the world, groups concerned about the survival of species, habitat preservation and destructive flooding are rapidly changing their approaches to wastewater management.

Although Seattle and King County, unlike many areas of the world, have a good drinking water supply, the destructive impacts of traditional wastewater and stormwater management are becoming apparent. Realization of the impacts of traditional methods of stormwater has led to changes through the years in the ways stormwater and wastewater are managed.

The Seattle Story

In the 1860s, shortly after settlement, Seattle's water supply was uncertain and waste materials piled up. Those were the days of outhouses, chamber pots, and garbage and animals in the streets. Seattle's population grew rapidly during the latter part of the 1800s, and its haphazard water and sewer systems gained the city a reputation as an unhealthy setting. Outbreaks of cholera and typhoid were the impetus for developing a protected water supply, sewers and storm drains. The great fire of 1889 provided the opportunity for developing what were then considered state of the art water and sewage systems. These included wood pipes, cesspools, and garbage hauled to landfills. By the early
1900s Seattle boasted of being the world’s healthiest city. (SPU history)

Economic Growth Takes Precedence

At the same time, changes were taking place that would have a long term impact on the city’s environment. In 1905, dredging began at the mouth of the Duwamish, a first step in its conversion to an industrial waterway. Downtown hills were leveled and scraped. The soils were used to fill the tidal flats and to give Elliott Bay the familiar abrupt edge that is more conducive to industry and shipping than to natural habitat. Closing the gap between Puget Sound, Lake Union, and Lake Washington was also a long term goal, realized with the completion of the Ballard Locks and the Montlake Cut in 1917. Lowering Lake Washington nine feet meant that major changes in the area’s drainage pattern also took place. The Ballard Locks became the outlet to the sea for Lake Washington. The Cedar River became the lake’s major inflow. Dikes, levees and dams were built to control water flow and to make low-lying lands suitable for agriculture and industry.

Sewer Systems Are Developed

During the early 1900s, engineers built combined sewers, single pipelines that carried wastewater and stormwater into the nearest body of water. In 1913 Seattle completed a mammoth brick sewer, twelve feet in diameter, that ran across the north end of Seattle to Fort Lawton (Discovery Park) where a pipe carried the effluent out to a depth of about twenty-five feet. It was believed that dilution and natural forces would purify the water. Since the 1950s, cities have separated their stormwater and wastewater systems, but in parts of Seattle, the old system remains.

Many of Seattle’s early sewer lines were combined lines. One thousand miles of these lines continue to serve the city. When heavy rains hit the system, the lines cannot contain the waters and there are overflows. These overflows take place at identified sites known as Combined Sewage Outflows (CSOs) and continue to dump untreated wastewater into local bodies of water. (See article on Stormwater, p. 36)

New Highways Bring New Suburbs

During the 1950s and ‘60s, the national highway system was built and the suburbs grew rapidly. Suburban development continued the common practices of clearing forests, scraping off topsoil prior to construction, and channeling runoff and wastewater into gutters or pipes where it could move swiftly to the nearest large body of water. The increasing miles of highways, streets, and sidewalks, a part of the urban and suburban scene, became collectors of harmful substances that moved along quickly into the drainage system, causing more problems.

This Water Is Filthy

The history of the management of runoff is a story of missteps, probably led by a vision of economic opportunities and a limited view of the ecosystem. Seattle’s boast in the early 1900s of being a healthy city was premature. The drinking water supply was clean, but by the 1950s Lake Washington was grossly polluted and the beaches of Fort Lawton (Discovery Park) were covered with slime. Sewage was typically piped out into the nearest body of water in the hope that dilution and dispersion would make it go away. Civic activist Jim Ellis and other civic leaders, including the League of Women Voters, initiated a campaign to clean up local waters through a King County governance system known as Metro that would establish a regional waste disposal system. After much discussion, the people voted for the measure in 1958. Metro built a plant at West Point (Discovery Park) to provide primary treatment. Primary treatment removes about half of the solids from sewage and then chlorinates the discharge to kill harmful organisms. At the time, this was standard wastewater treatment. The West Point plant opened in 1962 and is now described as a secondary treatment plant.

Additional plants were built at Renton and Carnation. Both of these plants provide additional treatment and produce some reusable effluent. The next major addition to King
County’s wastewater management system will be the Brightwater plant in Snohomish County. Discussions are taking place as to potential uses for the reusable water that the plant will be able to produce.

The area continues to pride itself on the cleanliness of Lake Washington and other local waters now safely used for swimming, fishing, and a variety of recreational purposes.

The View of the World Expands

In 1962, Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring* was published. Her immediate concern was the impact of the indiscriminate use of pesticides on the birds she loved to watch. As a result of her book, people became concerned not only about their own health but about the health of the planet. The concept of ecology grew in the 1960s, and the public pressured Congress and President Nixon to take some action. In 1969, Nixon set up a cabinet level Environmental Quality Council and a Citizens’ Advisory Committee on Environmental Quality. With the current concern for the environment and the ecosystems that it encompasses, it is hard to comprehend the lack of awareness of those concepts fifty years ago. Congress passed the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in December of 1969, and President Nixon signed it on January 1, 1970. The bill was comprehensive and called for the establishment of a Council on Environmental Quality. It was described by Senator Gaylord Nelson as the most important piece of environmental legislation in our history. The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970, and 20 million Americans came out for peaceful demonstrations. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established with subsequent legislation. After a flurry of discussion and negotiation, the EPA assumed many of the responsibilities such as air and water quality that had been the responsibility of other agencies. Bill Ruckelshaus, an assistant attorney general, was appointed the first director, and although the first years of the agency are described as rather chaotic, his energetic leadership is credited with establishing the agency as a vigorous advocate for the environment.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) had been passed in 1948, with amendments in 1972 and 1977. The act established the basic structure for regulating discharges into the waters of the U.S. Under the CWA, the EPA implemented pollution control programs and set wastewater standards for industry. It became unlawful to discharge any pollutant into navigable waters without a permit. That permit system, the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), established by the EPA, controlled point sources. Point sources are municipal or industrial pipes or ditches that lead to a body of water.

Ruckelshaus, in speaking of those early days, said that at the time he felt that the technologies existed to control pollutants and keep them at acceptable levels at reasonable cost; that national standards and enforcement were what was needed to solve the problem. He later noted that he was wrong on all counts. (Lewis)

Many of the early examples of pollution were blatant. Rivers burned, death rates increased with air pollution and sewage piled up. But Ruckelshaus soon learned that identifying and controlling many pollutants is not an easy task. It often requires research over a long period of time. Think of DDT, the PCBs, asbestos, etc. Banning a practice or chemical has an economic impact, and decisions are subject to political pressure. The current interest in organic products suggests that the public has become unsure of the safety and long term effects of the many additives that may have tainted the products in the marketplace.

Many historic practices of businesses and governments in using and disposing of environmentally detrimental materials that were not regulated at the time of their use have led to highly polluted sites that impact the health of people who live near them and damage the ecosystems of which they are a part. In King County, the Duwamish River and the industrial areas adjacent to it form such a site.

In 1980, the Superfund legislation was passed. It created a tax on the chemical and petroleum industries from which a trust fund...
was established for cleaning up abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The Duwamish River was listed as a Superfund site in 2001. There are several other Superfund sites as well in the Harbor Island area and in Lake Washington. (Superfund) (See Duwamish River, p.35)

State Responds to Growing Environmental Concerns

At the state level, Governor Dan Evans won passage of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) in 1971. SEPA requires that governmental agencies consider environmental factors in developments that may impact the environment. If initial government review indicates an action such as building a bridge or a highway or siting a business meets certain criteria, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required.

The state also passed the Shoreline Management Act by public referendum in 1972. The act has three broad goals: 1) to protect shoreline natural resources 2) to promote public access and 3) to encourage water-dependent uses. The Shoreline Management Act applies to all marine shorelines, such as Puget Sound, and larger lakes and rivers. It also applies to upland areas within 200 feet of the shoreline edge, floodplains and associated wetlands. The Seattle Shoreline Master Plan was last updated in 1987, and a current update is scheduled for completion by 2009. The state requires local governments to periodically update the shoreline regulations within their boundaries, consistent with state guidelines.

The Growth Management Act (GMA) was signed into law by Governor Booth Gardner in April of 1990. The concept was controversial, and the measure was a compromise. Since adoption, it has been amended regularly but it has established guidelines for managing growth in Washington’s most populous counties. The GMA requires that jurisdictions within the designated counties develop comprehensive plans that are regularly updated.

The GMA requires that local governments protect wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, and areas that are flood-prone, are subject to landslides, or are necessary for groundwater recharge. Ordinances governing critical areas, stormwater, clearing and grading are collectively known as Critical Areas Ordinances (CAO). The purpose of the CAO is to protect health, safety, and environmentally sensitive areas.

Critical areas and ecosystems include:
- wetlands
- areas important for fish and wildlife
- riparian corridors
- geologic hazard areas such as landslide and liquefaction-prone slopes
- flood prone areas
- abandoned landfills
- Seattle fault zone and areas at risk from tsunamis, seiches and lahars

King County and Seattle updated their Critical Areas Ordinances in 2006. The revisions focused on widening the buffer size for many wetlands, increasing protection of shoreline habitat for fish and wildlife, prohibiting the use of pesticides and fertilizers within fifty feet of streams, wetlands, and shorelines, and limiting development and encouraging vegetation along creek corridors. Opposition in the county centered on the ordinances extending the width of wetland buffers and limiting land clearing in critical areas.

In 1995 the GMA was amended to require counties and cities to include the best available science in establishing policies and regulations to protect critical areas. Periodic review of such ordinances by counties and cities is required by a schedule established by the state. (GMA)

King County Plans

The growing national environmental awareness of the 1960s–1970s was also reflected in local actions. King County won national recognition for its Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1964, which relied on written policies to guide land use decisions. While the plan was a significant step for the county, it did not fully anticipate the effect of the rapid growth that the county would experience and did not provide the framework
to coordinate the plans of private enterprise and public service that growth produced. The county then embarked on a study that led to the development of the 1985 King County Comprehensive Plan. This plan:

- established links between policies and implementation,
- established the Urban Growth Boundary that differentiated between rural and urban areas with specific policies for each area,
- provided for the preservation of critical areas, open spaces and resource lands.

Prior to the passage of the GMA in 1990, King County and the neighboring counties of Pierce, Snoqualmie and Kitsap formed the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), which now serves as the multi-county planning body required by the GMA. The PSRC developed VISION 2020 as its initial long term planning document and is now working on VISION 2040.

In 1994, King County adopted its first comprehensive plan as required under the terms of the GMA. The plan undergoes substantive revision every four years and those revisions were completed in 2000, 2004 and 2008. Each revision has broadened the scope of the plan and included goals directly related to the environment. (King County)

Flooding Is an Area-Wide Problem

Residents of Western Washington are surely aware that flooding is a widespread problem. Responding to snow melts and heavy rains is challenging. Ideally, fall and winter rains fall as snow in the mountains that melts gradually in the spring and summer. The records indicate that the type of flood expected to happen in the area every 100 years is happening more frequently. King County has been declared a federal disaster area ten times since 1990. Flooding has occurred in all the major river systems in King County during that time period.

The Kent and Sammamish Valleys were once part of extensive wetland systems that have been converted to agricultural and industrial use through damming and an extensive levee system. The areas are subject to flooding.

Traditional flood protection strategies included the construction of hard faced levees and the removal of sediment and large wood from streams. A major purpose of the strategies was to allow for increased development. Traditional approaches were not sensitive to the importance of habitat and its preservation.

The King County Council has been authorized by state ordinance to establish and serve as the board of supervisors of the King County Flood Control District. In 2007 the council adopted the King County Flood Hazard Management plan, which identifies and recommends policies, projects and programs to address flooding in King County. The council authorized a ten year property tax levy to fund the projects.

The King County Council’s current efforts to deal with floods in unincorporated areas of the county indicate emerging approaches to flood control. The flood hazard management plan is broad in its approach, considering existing development, habitat, open space, agriculture and recreation. It attempts to accommodate river processes rather than control them. The plan includes building levees that are setback from the streams and support a riparian habitat, acquiring properties that repeatedly suffer losses, changing standards for buildings in areas susceptible to flooding, and improving warning systems and public education.

In the Sammamish Valley, more agricultural in nature, building standards have also been changed and farmers have been allowed to build elevated pads where animals, feed supplies and equipment can be moved in times of high flood risk. (Flooding)

And Then The Salmon Disappeared

In 1999, the Puget Sound Chinook were listed as a threatened species under the terms of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The federal Endangered Species Act was first passed in 1969 and has been amended several times since. When a species is listed as threatened, the ESA
requires that a recovery plan be developed and approved. For the Puget Sound Chinook, it required a collaborative effort among federal, state, tribal and local governments as well as business and environmental organizations.

Water management in Washington is an extremely complex subject. The state is divided into sixty-two Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIs) or major watersheds. WRIA 8 includes the Sammamish-Cedar system and WRIA 9 includes the Green-Duwamish system. Each WRIA includes many local governmental jurisdictions. The February 2007 League of Women Voters publication summarizes a state study on water resources that gives extensive background on the state’s water resources. (Voter 7)

Prior to 1850, the areas encompassed in WRIs 8 and 9 were heavily forested, with meandering streams and numerous wetlands. Lowering the level of Lake Washington also lowered Lake Sammamish and affected many of the wetlands around it. The Sammamish River, like the Duwamish, was straightened and much of its shoreline hardened. In summary, through the years, local policies have created conditions that are detrimental to the survival of salmon. They have altered the flow and temperature of streams, altered the flood plains, cleared riparian vegetation, altered the stream beds and have also added chemicals, heavy metals and a slew of other pollutants.

Less than half of steelhead and salmon stocks in Puget Sound are considered healthy. Statewide, sixty-five percent of estuary miles have temperatures exceeding state water quality standards. Fifty-seven percent of the streams assessed in the Puget Sound lowland exceeded the standards for fecal coliform bacteria.

The decline of the Chinook is generally attributed to four factors: habitat, hydropower, harvest, and hatcheries. In response to the listing, the fourteen watershed groups which surround Puget Sound came together to develop a shared strategy. The strategy which also included the threat of pollution as a factor was presented for public comment and then submitted and adopted as the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan in January of 2007. Habitat is the focus of the planned strategy since this is the one of the factors over which local jurisdictions have the most control. (Salmon 8)

And Puget Sound Is In Trouble

The Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) was created by the state legislature in 2007 to lead efforts to restore the health of Puget Sound. The initial organizing group established was the PSP with Bill Ruckelshaus as its chair. This group is now known as the Leadership Council. The group then recommended David Dicks as the Executive Director of a newly established Puget Sound Partnership. The partnership was given three charges by the Legislature: 1) to establish an action agenda with the goal of accomplishing a 2020 cleanup of Puget Sound. 2) to develop measures of accountability and 3) to educate the public.

An Ecosystem Coordination Board is chaired by King County Executive Ron Sims. A nine member science panel chaired by UW Tacoma professor Joel Baker provides independent scientific advice.

An initial task of the partnership was to develop an action agenda for producing a healthy Puget Sound by 2020. A draft Puget Sound action plan was released in November, 2008. The action plan was adopted after public comment, and the partnership fulfilled its obligation to submit the action agenda to the legislature by December 1, 2008.

David Dicks, PSP executive director, in a presentation at a Plymouth Congregational Church Sunday Forum, outlined the strategies that he thought were essential for saving Puget Sound. He said that we must maintain the best places that now exist. He cited feeder bluffs as an example. Feeder bluffs crumble into the water, add nutrients and maintain the beaches below with needed sand. This need can create tensions. People who live at the top of those bluffs are trying to stop the soil from sliding out...
from under them, although it is badly needed to maintain the beaches below.

Dicks said that we must maintain or recreate some of the historic functions of the wetlands that bordered many bodies of water. He noted the restoration of the Nisqually Delta and the removal of the Elwa Dam as examples of that kind of action. Shoreline Management and Critical Areas regulation also serve that purpose. Dicks pointed out that most of the pollutants coming into the Sound are from non-point sources, namely runoff. He estimated that an average of 150,000 pounds of pollutants reach the sound each day from these non-point sources. (PSP)

Dicks believes that the organization for saving Puget Sound has to be restructured. There are hundreds of organizations with thousands of members that have a strong interest in the local environment and actively pursue specific goals. Coordination is needed to establish priorities and to develop relevant action plans.

People for Puget Sound is a nonprofit organization under the leadership of Kathy Fletcher that has been a tireless advocate for the protection of Puget Sound and the Straits of Juan de Fuca. It has spearheaded the campaign to pass required legislation and educate the public. The Puget Soundkeeper Alliance is another active organization, whose mission is to track down and stop the discharge of toxic pollutants into its waters. (People)

(Keepers)

Some Decisions Were Shortsighted

The city’s history has come back to haunt us. Streets were paved, hills flattened, rivers straightened, and wetlands filled to become agricultural areas or to facilitate growth in urban areas. It is hard to believe that the areas that now make up the parking lots and athletic fields near Lake Washington were once a city dump. Piling trash in the wetlands seemed like a good way to deal with the wetlands and the trash. Stormwater systems were developed to move runoff quickly into the pipes that led to bodies of water or later, treatment plants.

Streams were often diverted into underground pipes or through culverts and frequently used as a dumping ground for trash. Shorelines were hard-surfaced so that waters would move along quickly rather than spread out into adjacent wetlands. Dams, dikes and levees were built to keep water out of lowlands so they could be used for other purposes.

Another source of pollution related to stormwater is the incorporation of sewage into runoff waters. There are several sources of such wastes. One is the actual presence of animals or animal waste in waterways. Another is failing septic systems in areas where sewer lines may not be established. Another is the situation where sewer and storm drainage lines are not clearly separated and heavy runoff results in overflows of untreated sewage that is carried into local bodies of water.

Polluted runoff is also produced by construction practices that scrape off the forests and soil surfaces developed over thousands of years as repositories and filtering systems for the rain water that falls on them. This is particularly a problem in suburban areas where land is often prepared for development by clearing and bulldozing in preparation for building. Destroying the natural vegetation, especially the forests, is now recognized as a destructive practice with long-term effects.

Take a New Look

It is becoming apparent that the accepted practices of businesses, builders, residents, gardeners and governmental agencies contribute to a system in which the polluted runoff from those activities is proving to be a major factor in hindering the goal of achieving clean waters and a healthy environment.

Current research suggests that the earth functions as an ecological system with myriad subsystems:

- That vegetation, notably forests, plays a major role in maintaining a healthy environment;
- That pollutants are best eliminated at the source;
That efforts should be made to limit the amount of wastewater and more natural pathways should be developed for its incorporation into the environment.

The City System at Work

Seattle Public Utilities is the city department that manages waste, runoff and water within the city of Seattle. It was organized in its present form in 2006. The activities of the department are prescribed by the many requirements of the Washington State Department of Ecology and the federal mandates administered by that department. The SPU is now operating under a Comprehensive Drainage Plan adopted by the city council in 2005. Earlier comprehensive plans focused on major flooding problems in specific drainage basins in the city.

The current plan expands the surface water management role of SPU to include the following programs:

- Stormwater conveyance and flow control,
- Aquatic resource protection of both water quality and habitat,
- Public asset protection.

The stormwater conveyance program works to alleviate flooding and focuses on protection of health and safety and on protection against property damage. SPU has addressed, but not solved, most flooding problems associated with the main piping system and is now working to try to solve drainage problems locally using detention and infiltration.

Water quality programs continue to focus on controlling pollution at the source, and the drainage plan requires expanded monitoring activities. For habitat protection, the plan includes an increased focus on habitat including improving and protecting habitat conditions along creeks and affected shorelines.

The public asset protection program focuses on protection of drainage and wastewater infrastructure from undue risks and liabilities due to landslides; and on mitigation of the direct effects of system operation on or within landslide prone areas, including protection of other properties from landslides that could be caused by inadequate city infrastructure.

The SPU Drainage Plan is under review. Urban creek stewards who expressed their concerns about current practices were urged to participate in developing the revised plan.

The Federal Clean Water Act requires that jurisdictions that discharge stormwater into surface waters have a permit. These permits originated in the early 1990s, and were first required of large cities, state departments of transportation, and large county-owned stormwater facilities. The permits were called Phase I National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System regulations (NPDES). Seattle is now involved in the process of meeting the standards in the state’s stormwater manual and renewing its NPDES permit. The permit will next be updated in 2012. Smaller cities are now subject to Phase II requirements. Eighty additional cities in Washington are now subject to permitting and must prepare a plan consistent with the state’s stormwater manual. (SPU Planning)

What Have We Learned

Runoff and habitat destruction are critical factors that must be addressed in maintaining clean waters, maintaining and restoring native species, and maintaining Puget Sound. What is also becoming apparent is that individual and governmental practices contribute to the amount of pollutant material in runoff.

Rapid Runoff Is Costly

The costs of traditional systems of stormwater management are being recognized. Runoff is being widely recognized as a major source of pollution but the rapid movement of large amounts of fast moving water has many...
other impacts. The water moves rapidly over hard surfaces picking up pollutants on the streets and carrying them swiftly to a body of water or piping system. When these waters enter streams, they damage the existing habitats and often overflow. They overwhelm the sewer system and cause overflows into local bodies of water. They cause flooding and landslides, and destroy homes, agricultural lands, plant cover and infrastructure.

It is estimated that one-third of the pollution in Washington waters comes from stormwater sources. After rainstorms, twenty-three different pesticides have been found in Puget Sound streams. The impact of rapid runoff on the salmon population as it affects water quality and habitation has already been discussed. In addition, thousands of acres of potential shellfish production areas have been destroyed or contaminated.

Within Seattle’s current drainage system, in which wastewater and stormwater are carried in many of the same pipes, heavy stormwater flows result in overflows that carry pollutants into local bodies of water.

Stormwater Management Is Changing

In 1997, planners in Prince George County, Maryland indicated that they were going to use a new approach to cope with the problems caused by traditional methods of stormwater management even if it contradicted current and past practices. They were going to use decentralized small scale source control techniques to manage runoff. Those techniques became known as Low Impact Development (LID) practices. Now, less than a dozen years later, LID techniques are used worldwide and are highly publicized. Traditional practices resulted in inconsistent flows, varying water temperatures, polluted runoff and habitat destruction. LID practices attempt to stop pollutants at the source, preserve native soils and vegetation, and use natural and small storage features that allow water to infiltrate the ground slowly. These techniques are now widely used and subject to ongoing research, experimentation and regulation.

Such terms as Best Available Science (BAS), Best Management Practices (BMP), LID (Low Impact Development) and Natural Drainage Systems (NDS) are becoming accepted terminology in coping with runoff and habitat preservation. Best management practices are generally applied to locations that use materials or methods of operation that may allow pollutants to become part of the runoff if they are not carefully controlled. Methods of storage, emergency plans and temporary covers are required for businesses that may have polluting materials on site. Best management practices also include preserving site topsoil and vegetation where possible, reducing compaction and amending disturbed soils with compost to restore healthy soil functions (NDS13)

To illustrate, traditional development and low impact development approaches are described below.

Traditional building practices:
- Building site scraped and regraded, topsoil hauled away.
- Roofed buildings fill as much of the allotted space as the code allows.
- Building materials not evaluated in terms of chemical runoff.
- Gutters carry water from the roof to downspouts to the sewer lines.
- Impervious walkways, patios, and driveways.
- Buildings face a paved street with gutters that open to the sewer lines.
- Probably a sprinkler system installed to water a grassy lawn.
- Shrubbery chosen on a questionable basis.

Low impact development: (High Point Development in West Seattle)
- Minimal grading, topsoil stockpiled and reused.
- Approximately 2500 new trees added.
- A pond that collects and cleans stormwater runoff and directs the cleaned flow into Longfellow Creek.
- Over twenty-one acres of open space.
- Parks and open spaces maintained by organic landscaping methods.
- Pedestrian-friendly narrow streets and wide planting strips.
- Porous pavements and swales.
- Natural drainage system for entire 120-acre site.
- Native/drought resistant plants.

(SHA 14)

Seattle Develops a Plan

The Seattle Urban Creeks Legacy originated in 1999 as part of Seattle’s Millennium Celebration. It was, in part, a response to an active citizen effort to daylight local streams. The city’s four largest streams were chosen: Longfellow, Piper, Thornton and Taylor Creek. The basic goals were to improve the habitat, improve water quality and control creek flow. A major accomplishment of the project was the development of the creek stewardship program and its public education component. Most residents know their watershed. School children watch salmon eggs mature in tanks and take the young salmon to neighborhood streams. The stewards are knowledgeable about their area, its problems and needs.

The city has spent millions of dollars on stream restoration. Creeks have become valuable community resources, but the salmon coming up Longfellow Creek are dying before they spawn. The flow in the creek is controlled, the habitat is restored but the fish are dying. Extensive research is underway and early indications suggest that the pollutants found in runoff are responsible.

SPU has been experimenting with natural drainage systems for several years. Overflows of local streams during heavy rainfall were becoming an increasing problem. The first natural drainage system constructed by the City of Seattle was the SEA Street project, completed in the spring of 2001. It was followed by the 110th Street Cascade, completed in 2003. The Broadview Green Grid was completed in the spring of 2005. The High Point system was completed in 2005.

SPU has partnered with the University of Washington and the Department of Ecology to monitor and evaluate these projects. For a current review of the status of each creek, see City of Seattle, State of the Waters 2007. (Waters 15)

The City Develops a Strategy to Restore Our Waters

In 2004, Mayor Nickels instructed twelve city departments to conduct an inter-departmental review of everything the city does that affects water resources within the city limits and to develop a shared action plan. From this work, the city developed the plan called Restore Our Waters (ROW).

The initial directive from the mayor to twelve city departments was to develop a shared action plan that would:

- focus the city’s efforts towards achieving what is best for water quality and aquatic habitats,
- establish city-wide priorities, a shared framework for investment, and best management practices,
- develop a long-term framework for departments to work together on matters affecting local bodies of water,
- streamline and coordinate city policies, regulations, and enforcement,
- create educational opportunities that inspire others to take action on behalf of local bodies of water,
- provide incentives for others to steward, protect, and restore these resources,
- identify methods to leverage city funding of these efforts,
- create a mechanism for stakeholder involvement.

The work resulting from this directive resulted in nine related action strategies that represent a broad but specific program for restoring the waters in the city.

Included in the proposed actions are:

Action 4: Make strategic changes in the city’s policy and regulatory framework.
Action 5: Move forward on priority city
capital project investments.

Action 6: Make investments to ensure city operations support improved aquatic health.

These actions were selected because they represent specific responses to the goals listed above.

The city’s required plans, the Comprehensive Drainage Plan, Stormwater Plan, Critical Areas code, and Shoreline Master Plan are challenged to meet the goals of ROW. In addition, forty priority capital investments for the city to make over the next ten years have been identified. They include:

- Seven water quality improvement projects targeting the lakes and Puget Sound,
- Two major sediment removal projects for the Duwamish and Gasworks Park,
- Four natural drainage projects that include the streams,
- Comprehensive flow control strategies to reduce flows in high impact drainages (Thornton, Longfellow, Piper, Taylor),
- Studies to assess and facilitate channel widening strategies on the major streams,
- Fourteen shoreline habitat restoration projects,
- Reforestation projects on creeks and key shorelines.

Funds for these projects have been included in Seattle’s biennial budget.

Selected Activities Included In ROW

Seattle is recognized as a national leader in achieving green building standards on city-funded facilities and promoting green building in the community. The city’s green building strategies include green roofs, rainwater harvesting, natural landscaping, natural drainage, on-site infiltration, and porous pavement systems. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) is encouraging green building in the private sector through education. The DPD is proposing updates to the codes and facilitating the permit process. (ROW16)

Current Best Available Science and Best Management Practices suggest:

- A narrow street that is made of permeable materials, and is bordered with plants, has no gutters and no grate that empties into the sewer system.
- A house or garage with a green roof.
- Downspouts that empty on to the front lawn or into a rain garden.
- A garden that is not watered, fertilized with chemicals or sprayed with insecticides, but is enriched with compost.
- A house whose components, roof, siding, etc., have been tested to make sure they are not shedding some polluting material.
- An increasing forest cover.
- Bridges and streets that have built in runoff collectors that treat the pollutants or funnel the water into natural pathways that filter the pollutants out of the system.

Individual Actions Are Important

Much of this article has focused on the change of public attitudes toward the environment, the emerging role of science, and role of government in developing and enforcing standards. It is also becoming apparent that a major current cause of pollution is in the runoff from the areas in which we live.

Individuals can limit runoff and pollutants if they:

☑ Limit the amount of water used for plant and lawn irrigation. Choose plants that are drought resistant and suitable for the area in which they are planted. Most carefully chosen plants should require no supplementary watering after they are established.

☑ Eliminate the use of chemical fertilizers, weed killers, and pesticides.

☑ Never pour hazardous materials such as solvents, oil, weed killers, pesticides, etc. down the drain. Easily accessible hazardous waste disposal sites are available.

☑ Properly dispose of unused medications.
Prevent erosion by maintaining natural vegetation and tree cover on slopes.

Eliminate grassy lawns that require much care and often serve no specific purpose. The habitat established in a neighborhood influences the bird and other species that survive there. Canada Geese love grassy lawns.

Use compost to improve soil. In the history of agriculture, the need for more land has lead to the removal of forests and natural ground covers that preserved and enriched the soil in place.

Plan for patios and walkways that are not hard surfaced. Choose surfaces with spaces such as tile or brick that allow water to drain. Permeable sidewalk materials are also available.

Create areas such as flower beds or mini-collection areas where water can sink slowly into the ground.

Allow downspouts to drain into a garden area or a rain barrel.

Don’t use the street as the place to wash the car. Commercial car washing sites are equipped to properly dispose of wastewater.

Maintain automobiles so they are not dripping liquids such as oil or coolant.

Limit the amount of organic material that goes into the drainage system. Many homes are equipped with garbage disposals that add organic compounds to wastewater. Most of those materials may now be disposed of in yard waste containers.

Members of organizations, employee groups, and other associations, can:

- Urge organizations to limit the use of fertilizers and pesticides.
- Advocate for parking areas with flower beds and rain gardens.
- Check the policies in place at the neighborhood school.
- Review the policies and practices of the condominium association.

Citizens can:

- Participate in area activities to preserve and enhance the watershed.
- Follow and support the actions government to protect the environment.
- Question governmental activities that seem to be in conflict with environmental goals.

Once More

Currently, the most effective ways of limiting pollution are:

- Controlling runoff.
- Stopping it at its source.
- Limiting the amount of wastewater.
- Developing more natural pathways.
- Eliminating practices that add pollutants.

Many of the above actions require major changes in the way government agencies do business. Others require cooperative neighborhood action with technical help. But individual actions are very important and can stimulate large-scale actions and changes in policies.
Endnotes
3  Superfund  Superfund, www.epa.gov/superfund/.
4  GMA  Growth Management Act, HistoryLink.org Essay 7759.
5  King County  History of Comprehensive Planning in King County, HistoryLink.org. Essays 7752 and 7874.
6  Flooding  Flooding and Floodplain Management in King County, Presentation to LWVS, 11/19
www.kingcounty/environment/waterandland/flooding/flood-control-zone-district.
7  Voter  Denise Smith, “Challenges of Water Supply in Washington State,”
8  Salmon  The Steering Committee, Proposed WRIA Chinook Salmon
Conservation Plan. Feb., 2008
10 People  People for Puget Sound, Pugetsound.org.
11 Keepers  Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, Pugetsoundkeeper.org.
13 NDS  “Natural Drainage Systems Manage Stormwater, Create Greenspace,”
www.ecologycenter.org/terrain.
14 SHA  Seattle Housing Authority

Speakers Who Met With Committee
B. J. Cummings, Coordinator Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition,
Julie Hall, Strategic Advisor, Seattle Public Utilities, Science, Sustainability and Watershed Branch
Maggie Glowacki, Senior Planner, Fisheries Biologist, Dept. of Planning and Development
Debra Ross, Planner, Project Planning and Delivery, Wastewater Treatment Division.
Heather Trim, People for Puget Sound,
Jason Wilkinson, Program and Policy Support, River and Floodplain management, Water and Land
Resources Division, King County.

Committee Attended Three-Part Environmental Series at Plymouth Congregational Church:
1. Gene Duvernoy, Cascade Land Conservancy, November 2, 2008
2. David Dicks, Puget Sound Partnership, November 9, 2008
3. KC Golden, Climate Solution

Committee members also:
5. Attended the 2010 Combined Sewer Overflow Reduction Plan Workshop in September, 2008

Participated in Shorelines Field Tour: Shorelines Today and Tomorrow. Updating Seattle’s Shoreline Master
Program, Sept. 6, 2008. Led by Lorraine McConaghy, MOHAI, Maggie Glowacki, DPD, Judith Noble,
SPU, and Eric Hansen, Port of Seattle.

General reference
THE DUWAMISH WATERWAY

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) added the Lower Duwamish Waterway to the Superfund National Priorities list in September of 2001. The site is being cleaned up under a federal-state agreement between the EPA and the Washington State Department of Ecology. The listing was made on the basis of pollutants found in the bottom sediments of the Duwamish and evidence of contamination in the fish in the area.

The lower Duwamish is a strip of river about 5.5 miles in length which flows into Elliott Bay. The Duwamish is currently part of the Green River drainage system. While this system formerly drained Lake Washington, the lowering of Lake Washington by nine feet in 1917 made the ship canal locks the major outlet for waters from Lake Washington. This was one factor in changing the drainage pattern in south King County.

The Duwamish was once a meandering stream, part of a huge drainage system that included the Kent Valley. Prior to 1905, when dredging the mouth of the Duwamish began, the Duwamish estuary comprised more than 5,000 acres of tidal mudflats, marshes, swamps and riparian habitat. The lowering of the lake level, the construction of the Howard Hanson dam on the Green River and a system of levees have transformed an area of marshes and wetlands into the industrialized and urbanized Duwamish and Kent Valley.

The lower Duwamish has been converted by dredging and filling to a straight deep channel suitable for industrial use. It has served as a major industrial area for over eighty years, and area businesses now employ over 75,000 people. The area includes Boeing Plant 2 and Boeing Field, major production sites during World War II. Much of the pollution stems from that era.

Under the EPA cleanup program, seven “hot spots” were selected. Tons of material were dredged from the river bottom and moved to a landfill in eastern Washington. Such materials can be treated and reclaimed industrially. That is done on the east coast where landfill sites are scarce and very expensive. The choice of landfills in Washington was made for economic reasons.

After the polluted sediments were removed, the bottom was capped with a layer of clean material. However, research indicates that hot spots Slip Four in Georgetown and Terminal 117 in South Park are being recontaminated from several sources.

The Washington Department of Ecology is the lead agency for pollution source control. The city of Seattle, King County, the Port of Seattle and the Boeing Co. (Plant 2) have signed a cleanup agreement; each is responsible for identified sources of pollution. The sources in Seattle and King County are their storm drain and sewer systems. The Port has source and contaminated upland property issues. Boeing Field is an ongoing source of pollution, in part because of the materials used in its construction. Each organization will pay the costs of cleaning up those pollutants for which it is responsible.

Other sources of pollution are being searched out. This is an extremely complicated issue because of the history of many pieces of property that included changes in ownership as well as use. Many chemicals then not classified as pollutants were used freely and dumped into the waterway. The area was also used as disposal site for debris such as old concrete and creosoted timbers, rusted tanks and vehicles whose dangerous nature was not recognized.

(continued on page 36)
The Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition (DRRC) is the EPA’s officially recognized community advisory group. It is an alliance of community, environmental and small business groups affected by the cleanup plans for the Duwamish. It is staffed and is involved in all aspects of planning. The DRRC has been involved in an extensive planning process to develop a VISION for the community.

The VISION, while optimistic and appealing, is in contrast to the Lower Duwamish Remedial Inventory, published in late 2007, that paints a bleak picture of the status of the Duwamish.

Sources:
www.govlink.org/watersheds
www.seattleindustry.org

The Seattle PI published a three part report in November of 2007 that has been summarized in a report, The Duwamish, A River Lost? This is basically a summary of The Lower Duwamish Remedial Inventory, published by the EPA.

STORMWATER

When cities began to install pipes to carry away waste materials, they typically built one line that would carry off wastewater, which included sewage from residences and stormwater from the streets, and empty it into a nearby body of water. This practice ended after 1950, but many older cities continue to have lines that carry both wastewater and stormwater. Seattle has 530 miles of sewer lines, 500 miles of stormwater lines and 1000 miles of combined lines. During heavy rains, combined lines often overflow and a mix consisting of stormwater and wastewater is discharged at outflows. These are called Combined Sewage Outflows (CSOs). Both Seattle and King County have CSOs, which are jointly managed by the King County Wastewater Treatment Division, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and Public Health. Seattle has 90 permitted outfalls, 41 of them controlled and 49 uncontrolled. Controlled outflows have mechanisms for limiting the outflow. King County has 37 outflows, 17 controlled and 20 uncontrolled. Since 1999, warnings have been posted near outfalls. They warn the public of possible dangers and post an information line number for the public to call. Most residents would be surprised to see the number of outfalls along the city’s shorelines. They are concentrated along the Lake Washington shore from Sand Point to Seward Park and in the Lake Union/Portage Bay area. The sewage is diluted by large amounts of stormwater, but discharging untreated sewage is not good practice.

King County adopted a Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) in 1999. It outlines policies and projects to be implemented through 2030. It calls for the elimination of all CSOs by 2030.

Seattle is updating its Combined Sewer Overflow Reduction Plan. Updating this plan is required by the Washington State Department of Ecology. This plan will identify CSO control projects for the coming decade. The CSO plan is a component of the city’s wastewater management plan that is required by the Department of Ecology and is expected to be completed by 2010. Controlling or removing outfalls requires considerable capital investment. SPU has been holding public meetings to obtain public input about which outflows should be targeted and by what methods. Preliminary recommendations include removing outflows from areas where people fish and from areas where they contaminate fresh water streams.

Currently, the preferred method of handling excess stormwater is to store it in large underground tanks during storms and release it more slowly into the pipes where it will be taken to a treatment plant. As a consequence
of the flooding in Madison Valley, a plan is being developed to build a holding tank under the Washington Park playfield to store stormwater.

The goal of city planning is to limit the CSOs from each outfall to no more than one a year. Currently forty-three meet that standard; forty-seven do not meet the standard and discharge from two to thirty times per year.

**GARDENING WITH LESS WATER, LIMITED FERTILIZER, AND NO PESTICIDES**

by Anne Mack, a Mercer Island Gardener and a Member of the Native Plant Society

Up to the present time, Northwest gardeners have taken for granted an unlimited supply of water for the many kinds of gardens customary here. We have a tableau of ornamental gardens, acreage for growing food, and lawns large and small. All of these usually are treated with commercial fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides. The runoff eventually ends up in some body of water, a stream or lake.

Lawns can be converted into meadows by using native plant material, flowers, shrubs and trees that need only occasional watering during the dry season. Areas for growing food and ornamental gardens can be maintained by drip irrigation. Fertilization can be achieved by composting garden and kitchen waste and using the compost as needed for planting and mulching. A redirection of work and resources is needed. There are public and private sources for plans and assistance, from King County to the Washington Native Plant Society.

My own experience with plantings and a garden over the past years is that runoff and water use can be reduced substantially. The current lawn is enchanting with colorful spring and summer flowers. The kitchen garden feeds us all summer and fall. The ornamentals only need care in the spring and fall. The reward is the year-round enjoyment of a garden that provides much satisfaction and many surprises.

**A Resource**

The Growing Wild Program is managed by the Central Puget Sound Chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society. It emphasizes growing native plants in a sustainable manner and using those plants to attract wildlife. The program includes a visit to your garden and evaluation by trained consultants for a donation. Growing Wild can be contacted at (206) 527-3210 or lindaellis@wnps.org.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Meetings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday, February 9, 2009</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SOUTHEAST</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam Schaff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ann Thornton</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ISSAQUAH EVENING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Patti Catalano</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerry Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FIRST HILL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeannette Kahlenberg</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CAPITOL HILL/MONTLAKE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan O’Connor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vicky Downs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, February 10, 2009</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BELLEVUE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie Rimawi</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEST SEATTLE DAY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEST SEATTLE EVE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara O’Steen</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NORTH END AFT.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Helen St. John</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, February 11, 2009</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VIEW RIDGE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gail Winberg</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MAGNOLIA/QUEEN ANNE/BALLARD EVE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bettina Hosler</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday, February 12, 2009</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ISSAQUAH</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Austin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jocelyn Marchisio</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NORTH CENTRAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Orlando</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gail Shurgot</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MERCER ISLAND</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Martha Jordan</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SHORELINE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Juliet Beard</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNIVERSITY HOUSE – WALLINGFORD</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Slotnick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marilyn Paulson</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, February 18, 2009</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LAKE FOREST PARK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Judy Bevington</td>
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<td><strong>Saturday, February 21, 2009</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BALLARD/QUEEN ANNE/MAGNOLIA DAY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Joan Peterson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shirley Gerstenberger</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, February 24, 2009</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PIONEER SQUARE</strong></td>
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<td>Kathleen Randall</td>
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## Board & Committee Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–2009</td>
<td><em>President</em></td>
<td>Denise D. Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>1st V.P. Membership</em></td>
<td>Kitty Mahon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd V.P. Program</td>
<td>Nora Leech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>3rd V.P. Voter Service</em></td>
<td>Sarah Luthens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2009</td>
<td>4th V.P. Action</td>
<td>Jayne Freitag-Koontz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Karen Adair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Allison Feher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>Maria Brusher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unit Coordinator</td>
<td>Patti Catalano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Voter Editor</td>
<td>Beatrice Crane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civics Education</td>
<td>Jaclyn Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>Observer Corps</td>
<td>Anita Warmflash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2009</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Christal Wood</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Term Directors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Directors</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007–2009</td>
<td>President*</td>
<td>Betty Sullivan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Dorothy Y. Sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007–2009</td>
<td>Treasurer*</td>
<td>Lisa Peterson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>Secretary*</td>
<td>Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Off-Board Positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIS Coordinator</td>
<td>Cynthia Howe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:howe.john@comcast.net">howe.john@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund Development</td>
<td>Victoria Bennett</td>
<td><a href="mailto:funddevelopment@seattlelwv.org">funddevelopment@seattlelwv.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Oversight</td>
<td>Karen Lahey</td>
<td><a href="mailto:karen@laheyfamily.org">karen@laheyfamily.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civics Education</td>
<td>Jaclyn Wall</td>
<td><a href="mailto:speakingstrategies@hotmail.com">speakingstrategies@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics &amp; Taxation</td>
<td>Nora Leech</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nleech2002@yahoo.com">nleech2002@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lucyg@seattlelwv.org">lucyg@seattlelwv.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Justice Committee</td>
<td>Vanessa Soriano Power</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vanessa.power@gmail.com">vanessa.power@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Study Co-chair</td>
<td>Annette Holcomb</td>
<td><a href="mailto:anholc@earthlink.net">anholc@earthlink.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Study Co-chair</td>
<td>Barbara Reid</td>
<td><a href="mailto:barbereid@yahoo.com">barbereid@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>Ellen Berg</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ellenberg@msn.com">ellenberg@msn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>Karen Kane</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kanek@iopener.net">kanek@iopener.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Linnea Hirst</td>
<td><a href="mailto:LWVquilter@comcast.net">LWVquilter@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Study</td>
<td>Linda Brown</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brownlj@comcast.net">brownlj@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privatization Study</td>
<td>Nora Leech</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nleech2002@yahoo.com">nleech2002@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FEBRUARY FORUM
Drainage

Speakers:
Joan Lee: Issues Facing Stormwater Managers
Bill Derry: Ecological Impact of Development
Tracy Tackett: Green Stormwater Infrastructure
Mark Isaacson: King County Flooding

☞ Thursday, February 5, 2008 ☞
7:30-9:00 p.m.

Unit Leaders Briefing - 6:30 p.m.

Location:
Seattle First Baptist Church
1111 Harvard Avenue (Harvard & Seneca)
Seattle, WA 98122

All forums are free and open to the public.