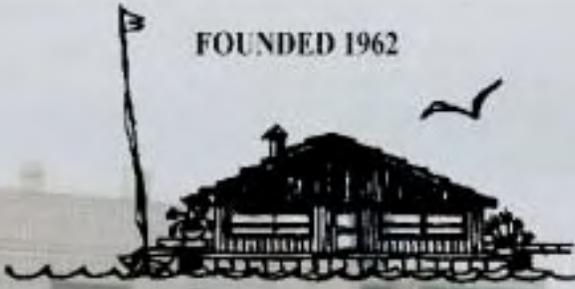


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FLOATING HOMES
ASSOCIATION



NUMBER 145

Newsletter

SUMMER 2004

Westlake Dock Fire
Annual Meeting Report

Urban Eagle

The Wildlife Pushes Back In

Waterlog



Tour Day: September 12

2004 Seattle Houseboat Tour

Sunday, September 12th



Visit 12 floating homes from noon to 5 pm

For tickets and information call 206.323.3489 - www.seattlefloatinghomes.org

By Melissa Ahlers FHA Fundraising Chair

It is time for the 2004 Houseboat Tour!

This year's tour will feature twelve homes, seven on East Lake Union and five on West Lake Union. The selection of homes reflects the eclectic houseboat community, the old and new, the feel of the community and our lifestyle on the water.

The Tenas Chuck Co-op, designated a National Heritage Historical District, features a re-modeled houseboat emulating a craftsman home complete with an old fashioned farm hand pump that draws lake water to a second story roof top garden. On other docks, tour participants will delight at the views of Lake Union from an underwater porthole window and enjoy the "spitting fish" fountains that cascade into the lake. One home features its own dock and a Boston Whaler used for commuting to work and another features a bedroom painted with colors inspired by Tchaikovsky's home. The showcase of artist works that inspire the creative interiors of the houseboats will be enjoyed by one and all. Viewers will be delighted to see innovative and interesting uses of space,

and to find whimsical nooks, surprising vistas, and secret gardens. And, of course, there is ever-present access to the water that creates a mood and lifestyle all its own.

The tour is Sunday, Sept. 12th, from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. Tickets are \$25 each, and can be purchased in advance by sending a check for \$25 per ticket to the Floating Homes Association office at 2329 Fairview Ave. E., Seattle, WA 98102. For VISA transactions, call Jann at 323-3489.

Tickets will also be for sale the day of the tour, from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at Terry Pettus Park (East Lake Union) at the foot of Newton Street, on Fairview Avenue East. Numbers will be limited; advance purchase will guarantee viewing.

The admission price includes shuttle transportation via bus and electric boat between the East and West shores of Lake Union. The tour will take place rain or shine, and free espresso drinks will be provided!

If you would like to volunteer and tour for free, call Melissa at 206.709.9376 or e-mail melissa@ahlers.org and let her know whether you would like to volunteer from 12:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

We look forward to seeing everyone on tour day!

The Floating Homes Association

2329 Fairview E
Seattle, WA 98102

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Jan, Bill**

www.SeattleFloatingHomes.org

Summer 2004



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Please note: Advertisers represented in this *Newsletter* are not endorsed by the Floating Homes Association.

Cover: Marilyn Robertson, who writes the Waterlog, says, "I heard the crows making a racket and looked out to see a bald eagle on the roof next door. What a surprise. Often we see eagles on this property, in a tall evergreen near the street, but never so close to the houseboats. He was being buzzed by crows but appeared indifferent to their noise and dive bombing. I yelled for Jim (Weyand), who grabbed his camera and caught the majestic pose."

Association Standing Committee Reports



Security & Safety

Giff Jones
Tiffany McNamara
Co-Chairs

Dockwatch

Auto theft and burglaries are once again a tremendous problem for houseboat dwellers this summer. Please secure your autos and homes and question unfamiliar people walking your dock. The email crime alert program called the Dock Watch is one way to stay informed of recent crime in our neighborhood. If you do not get the Dock Watch but would like to sign up please visit our web site www.seattlefloatinghomes.org, click on "Lake and Bay" and finally "Dock Watch." – Tiff McNamara

Some Fire Prevention Do's and Don'ts

A recent houseboat dock fire may have been related to electrical problem(s). Fires are often caused by overheated extension cords or undersized or improperly installed wiring circuits. Here are a few things to look for in your own home:

Extention Cord Don'ts: Never "daisy-chain" or use multiple extension cords to increase length. Use only power cords of adequate size and length. Never use an extension cord that is of less capacity than the device or cord you are plugging in. Don't use a "skinny" extension cord to connect a "fat" one to a receptacle. Capacity (current carrying capability) is spelled out on all newer appliances and extension cords. Don't use damaged, cracked, or otherwise worn-out extension cords. Don't place an extension cord

where it can be walked on or tripped over, or be exposed to mechanical damage. Do not "bury" extension cords behind/inside walls, under carpet or in other inaccessible areas. For outdoors, use only approved external extension cords with a GFI outlet (see below). Do not tamper with the third grounding conductor of an extension cord in order to make it work in an older two-slot receptacle. This safety ground is especially important around a water environment. Undersized "skinny" extension cords, those that are too long, and those that make poor connections all cause resistance which causes heat which can cause.... you know the answer!

Outlets: If your home does not have grounded electrical receptacles ("three holers"), you might consider having a qualified installer upgrade your circuits. This can often be done by furnishing a separate ground wire to the back of the receptacle without having to replace the entire wiring circuit. In bathrooms, kitchens, outdoors, and other areas near water it's particularly important to use GFI (ground fault interupter) outlets. This is an inexpensive device and easy to install if you already have grounded conductor circuitry (three-hole outlets).

Service Panel: Have a qualified person check to insure that the total usable electrical load in your home does not exceed the capacity of your main panel, especially if it is an older **fuse** panel. Newer style **circuit breaker** panels, if installed professionally, are generally properly sized for the home. Check to ensure that any sub-panels added later are not causing an overload and that all circuits are protected by a properly-sized fuse or circuit breaker. Electricity flows through wires similarly to water flowing through a garden hose. If you restrict, kink, or damage the hose all you lose is water pressure. If you restrict the flow through your "electrical hose" though, your losses can be far more dramatic. – Giff Jones



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Association Standing Committee Reports

Another Dock Fire

Electrical Fire severely damages Phil Bannon's Westlake workshop.

by Scott Pearson

On a rainy June morning, Seattle Fire Department rigs and the Seattle Police Department Patrol Boat 4 responded to a structure fire in Westlake Cove. The building, perched on an embankment at the entrance to a floating home dock, was used by floating home resident Phil Bannon for storage and as a workshop.

Faulty wiring reportedly sparked off the fire, quickly put



Photos by Scott Pearson



out by the rapid response of firefighters from both Police Patrol Boat 4 and the Fire Department. The fire severely damaged but did not destroy the building. Art supplies and other materials Bannon stored there were burned, including an old motorcycle.

Nearly two months later, Bannon is still removing charred remnants and beginning to remodel the two-story structure.

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Association Standing



Legislative & Legal
Sheri Greaves, Chair

UW Offers
20 Year Lease

1409 Boat Street Dock: It's not quite time to pop the champagne corks, but it's getting close. The UW has presented the 1409 Boat Street floating home owners with a draft lease which will guarantee 20 years of residence on the dock. We have had one meeting of the floating home owners and the UW Real Estate Office staff, plus Mike Ryherd, our lobbyist, and me. Uriel Ybarra, Representative Ed Murray's legislative assistant, also attended that meeting. The meeting went well, and our FHA attorney, Peter Eglick, is currently reviewing the lease language. We will send our comments in to the UW Real Estate Office in a few days. We are optimistic that the lease will be finalized and put into place within a few weeks. Once the signatures are on the dotted line, the UW dock folks have promised a party!! Be listening for those champagne corks! – **Sheri Greaves**

DNR Update: Some of you may already know that Lance Davisson has left DNR and our old friend, Lori Price, is back! We're glad to have her back. I have had several conversations with her about on-going issues, primarily the bond requirement for floating home moorages on DNR leased land. Mike Ryherd and I will be meeting with Lori to discuss that, as well as other, pending issues. If you have had some experience trying to get a bond, being refused a bond, or whatever, please let me know as soon as possible, so Mike and I will be able to have some facts to present to Lori. She has been very willing to help us "think outside the box" to come up with some creative solutions to our unique lifestyle.

The question about leasing to condominiums has also apparently been resolved by DNR. They will lease to condominiums, but the lease must be with the condominium association, not individual floating home owners. If you have a lease pending, please contact Lori Price directly at 360-825-1631, X-2701, or lori.price@wadnr.gov, or feel free to call me at any time at 206-667-6756, or sgreaves@fhcra.org.

I gave a brief explanation at the Annual Meeting in April about how the DNR lease rates are determined, but it was a lot of information in a short period of time. That same information is shown in the box at right. Please note that DNR lease rates are based on the King County property assessment for the adjacent upland property. DNR is not directly responsible for the increases in your lease rate. If you have a large increase in your KCA property taxes, you should always appeal because it does impact your DNR lease rate. If you have questions about

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Committee Reports

this or any other issues regarding DNR leases, please let me know. – **Sheri Greaves**

Right to Notice of Moorage Sale. Last May, the City Council passed a law giving houseboat dock tenants the right to a 90-day notice of the sale of their moorage. The new ordinance is an attempt to plug the gaps opened in the protections rental houseboats have against abuse and eviction as a result of the repeal of the Right of First Refusal ordinance earlier this year. The new law requires a moorage owner to inform his tenants 90 days before taking any “tangible steps” toward selling (listing the property, for example). The ordinance also includes provisions designed to prevent rent gouging based on the sale price of “sweetheart” transactions. – **Bill Keasler**

HOW ARE DNR LEASE RATES DETERMINED?

Lease Rate =

$$\frac{\text{KCA value of upland parcel}}{\text{sq ft of upland parcel}}$$

X sq ft of DNR leased land

X DNR capitalization rate

X rate of inflation

X 30% discount

Upland parcel = the adjoining parcel to the DNR leased land which has some upland characteristics (meaning must have some dry land)

KCA value = the appraised value of the upland parcel as determined by the King County Assessor's Office

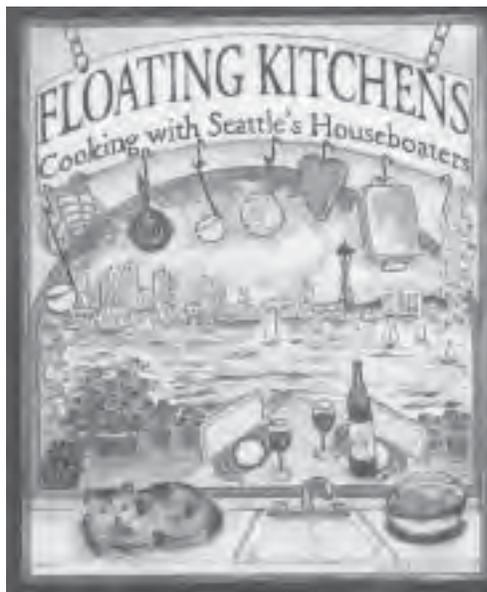
DNR capitalization rate = the real rate of return (5% in 1989, and never > 7% or < 3%)

Key Points:

- Floating homes leases are considered water-dependent so receive the best possible lease rate (discounted by 30%).
- Leases are adjusted every 4 years based on the KCA appraised value for that year. In the interim years, the rate of inflation only applies.
- If the adjoining upland parcel “has an assessed value inconsistent with the purposes of the lease, the nearest comparable upland parcel used for similar purposes shall be substituted.”
- If you are unhappy with your DNR lease rate, you can do two things:
 - 1) Appeal the property tax assessment to King County.
 - 2) Appeal to DNR to make sure the upland parcel being used is appropriate.

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Association Standing Committee Reports



Environmental

Betty Swift, Chair

Portage Bay Milfoil Meeting

In late May, a meeting at the Seattle Yacht Club brought an opportunity for residents of the Portage Bay community to air opinions on what, if anything, to do about the milfoil that clogs the bay. Both the Queen City and Seattle Yacht Clubs would like to maintain vegetation-free areas under their docks and throughout a large portion of the bay. The clubs favor annual or alternate-year herbicide applications to accomplish this, while a coalition of bay residents is urging the use of non-chemical means of control and a smaller treatment area.

Shortly before the meeting, the yacht clubs completed treatment of 29 acres of water with Diquat, a non-selective contact herbicide that kills all plant growth, natives and exotics, to the root level. Plants in the affected area will regenerate from their roots in the coming season. This is the second application of herbicide that has been applied in Portage Bay by the yacht clubs. When they seek permitting for a third chemical application, the clubs will be required to develop a long-term vegetation management plan and to hold public meetings.

Points brought forth at the meeting were, of course, advantages and drawbacks of chemical treatments as expressed by those who favor and oppose long-term use of

chemicals in public waters. Residents of the bay neighborhoods were vocal in their demand for more public and timely information about the yacht clubs treatment plans and emphasized the need for solid scientific information about the health of the entire bay ecosystem. Six non-chemical methods of control were presented as alternative treatment methods that are getting increasing use and acceptance in control of milfoil.

The Seattle Yacht Club proposed a follow-up meeting in October.

Good information sites for questions about milfoil and other problem exotic water weeds are provided by the State Department of Ecology and Metro/King County:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/eap/lakes/aquaticplants/index.html

dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/waterres/smlakes/kcmilfoilplan.htm

What to do about oil spills?

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No: don't add to the problem with detergents.

It disperses the oil throughout the water column and detergent damages the gills of fish.

Even if the spill can't be trapped and properly cleaned up, it is best to let the oil vaporize into the air.



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Federal and State laws limit the time to control milfoil at your property to October 1st through April 15th, so call today!

Association Standing Committee Reports

Membership & Communications

Emily Hine, Chair



Calling All Floating Home Artists

The Floating Homes Association is looking for a volunteer to help us update our FHA logo. We haven't updated the logo since 1962 & it's time!

We are looking for a creative person who can either draw a new logo or create something unique and artistic with computer graphics. The logo is used on our newsletter, web site and letterhead and will need to reflect our community and our lifestyle. For more information, please call Emily Hine at 206-817-4241.

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Volunteers Make a Clean Sweep of Lake Union

By Jan Carlson

Excitement and commitment to a clean lake filled the air as houseboaters and their neighbors gathered at South Lake Union Park on land and in kayaks, canoes and motor boats to embark on the second annual Lake Union Sweep. To help kick off the event on May 15, Mayor Greg Nickels, a Puget Soundkeeper Alliance board member, offered words of encouragement. Volunteers then parceled out nets, grabbers, rubber gloves and plastic bags to boaters and land lubbers alike and organized them into groups before they fanned out around Lake Union and Portage Bay to give it a spring sprucing up. This kayaker-volunteer paddled to the event full of anticipation of the day's events and awareness of the stunning beauty around her. The Lake is a gem worth caring for.

Land volunteers picked up trash, weeded flower and shrub beds, spread mulch and helped paddlers get the trash closest to shore in the parks dotted around the lake while boaters gathered trash of all kinds out of the

250 volunteers removed a record 8,200 pounds of trash, double last year's poundage.

water. In all an estimated 250 volunteers removed a record 8,200 pounds of trash, double last year's poundage. The heap included everything from lampshades to car batteries (three in all), TV sets (2), timbers, oil absorbent booms, metal, lots of rope and a leaking bottle of bleach. Of course, the ubiquitous plastic bottles and bags, Styrofoam and cigarette butts made up a large piece of the pile. The King County environmental laboratory boat motored out to help paddlers in small boats pick up large pieces of trash.

The Puget Soundkeeper Alliance gets a grant from King County Water Works to spearhead the event. They then pull in a variety of other programs and sponsors, this year 35 in all. EnviroStars, a service of King County Hazardous Waste, is a partner in the planning and organization of the Sweep.

After the trash was all piled up on land to be properly disposed of, Aqua Verde, and Dukes Chowder House, fed the by now hungry volunteers as the Duo of Correo Aereo entertained them with Latin music. The organizations involved also gave out prizes through a drawing and set up an environmental fair where volunteers could find out the mission of each group and how individuals could help.

A Dodgy Night for Fishing



Photos by Jann McFarland



During the short salmon fishing season in Lake Union the Native American boats are here for several nights. They work in pairs and set their nets. Throughout the night you can hear them talking between boats, see the spotlights and smell their cigarettes wafting through the air. Tuesday evening they came into the lake to set their nets, but were confounded by and surrounded by assorted sailboats racing in Duck Dodge. They finally gave up and left the area.

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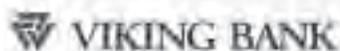
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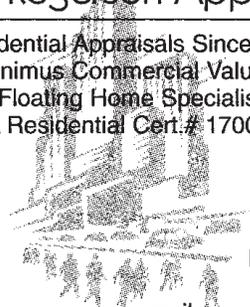
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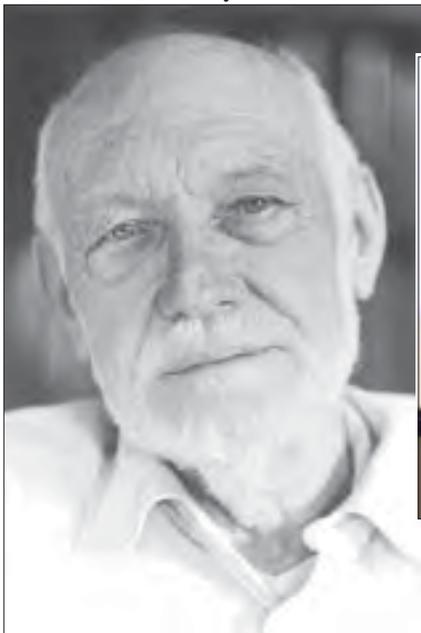
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2004 Annual Meeting

Information-packed meeting draws well over 100 people to the Pocock Rowing Center.

FHA founder Terry Pettus



FHA lobbyist Mike Ryherd



Emily Hine delivers the membership report.



More photos, PowerPoint slides, and other material from the meeting can be found by going to www.seattlefloatinghomes.org, choosing "The FHA", and then clicking "Annual Meeting Resources".

The Floating Homes Association's 42nd Annual Meeting on April 29th featured a video about the life of legendary Association founder and icon, Terry Pettus. The video was presented by houseboater Veronica Galvin and created in collaboration with two classmates as a middle school project.

In addition to reports from the FHA Standing Committee chairs, several guest speakers were also on the agenda. Drew Kerr, from King County's Noxious Weed Control Program, talked about milfoil and its annoying cousins. Sonja Richter, from the Seattle Police Department, described some things we can do to protect our homes. And FHA lobbyist Mike Ryherd reported progress in Olympia on the U Dock and lease bond issues.

The meeting ended with Board elections and adjourned to a Social Hour with Complimentary Refreshments.



Business was brisk at Marty Greer's Complimentary Refreshments tables.



Giff and Mary Jones organized the popular "Houseboatique."

In Memoriam

Fredrick "Fritz" Hedges 1943 - 2004



The residents of Dock Henderson, were saddened by the sudden death of Fredrick "Fritz" Hedges on March 27. He was bicycling with his long time companion, Belinda Gigliotti when he suffered a fatal aneurysm. Fritz had lived in his houseboat on Portage Bay for over 30 years and worked for Seattle's Parks and Recreation nearly as long. Belinda and Fritz were to be married later this year.

Fritz was born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana and received a degree in Civil Engineering from Tulane University in New Orleans. He spent several years in the U.S. Navy Civil Engineer Corps in Hawaii before he was sent to Vietnam in 1968.

Belinda said Fritz moved to Seattle from Hawaii in 1970. By 1971 he was enrolled in graduate school at the University of Washington. After he obtained his Masters degree in Urban Planning he went to work for Parks and Recreation. During those years he was Director of Planning and Education, Director of Citywide Programs and Services, Acting Deputy Superintendent, and a planner. Belinda and Fritz met at Parks and Recreation.

While he was working on his degree, Fritz bought the houseboat on Fuhrman Avenue. It was inexpensive, close to the campus and was a great place to party. "And he lived there ever after," Belinda said. "He loved that houseboat. I always called it his mistress because he just couldn't give it up."

Fritz enjoyed life on the water. He swam each morning during the summer. For many years he threw a big party on opening day of boating season. But the event highlight was watching the Kentucky Derby. Placing "gentleman's bets" added to the excitement. Fritz revitalized the party one last time, in 2003, to celebrate his 60th birthday.

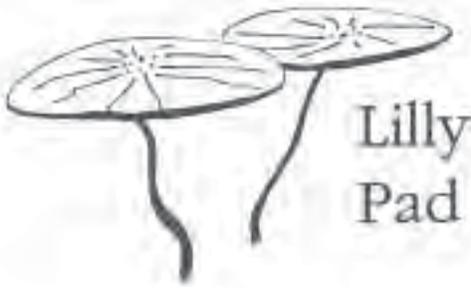
Belinda and Fritz shared many interests. "We kayaked constantly. That included viewing the fireworks from Lake Union every New Years Eve and the Fourth of July. It's how we brought in the new millennium, holding on to the kayaks for dear life in the wind, while trying to pour champagne."

Belinda feels they were lucky to have done so much in the ten years they were together. He was fun to be with. "We weren't just in love, we were friends. Fritz was intelligent, had great humor and was a generous person. He did little thoughtful things for me, like, while I worked at Green Lake, he came over each day and made me lunch."

Fritz's quote from a resume seems to sum up his contentment. "I came to Seattle in 1970 for UW grad school, discovered Parks and Recreation, plus houseboat living and stayed." — **By Marilyn Robertson**



"Bufflehead"
Beth Means



Lilly
Pad

By Bob Lilly

Summer 2004

We are in our watering season now, summer is really upon us. One of the lessons I have learned from my houseboat plants is the critical nature of a strict watering program. Plants demand water every day in hot weather. Water any time of day. Watering in the morning will allow your deck to dry out during the rest of the day. Don't forget to monitor your plants on the cooler days. Most important of all – don't count on summer rain. Plants can wilt in a very short time. One wilting is usually OK, twice is dangerous and beyond that, it's a downhill slide in condition, quality and performance. Lavender and rosemary are easy to kill. If they get bone dry, they are dead. No plant in a pot is drought tolerant, except cactus, and in the Northwest there are few hardy outdoor cacti.

You Can't Count On Saucers. There are several reasons why most plants cannot sit in a saucer of water on a hot day. The water will get too hot, all the oxygen will be gone, and the soil will soak up the all too often sour water creating an environment that can quickly kill the roots. Drain holes and perlite, vermiculite, and pumice have drainage *and* oxygen functions in the soil, both critical for healthy plants. Also, water with fertilizer sitting in a saucer, can quickly breed bacteria that will remove all the oxygen.

Super Dry to Super Wet. Some plants (shrubs, most annuals and almost all vegetables) are unable to tolerate super dry to super wet conditions. If your plants have wilted several times and you soak them to soggy or put them in a saucer or bucket for more than a few hours, the root system will

be so damaged the plants will not recover.

Hydrophobic. You can get your soil so dry that it will not absorb water well. This situation often shrinks the soil and all the water runs down the inside edge of the pot and right out the drain hole. A monitored soak in a bucket or saucer will solve this problem. You can also do a slow dribble from a hose for an hour or two.

Older Plants. A soaking for larger plants and trees is sometimes called for in warmer weather. This is usually done with the hose method (see above), or watering several times within an hour.

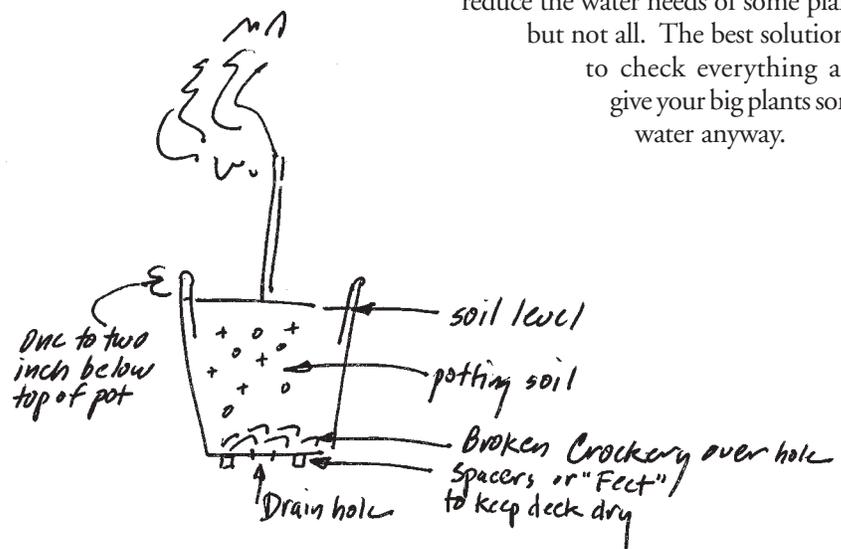
How Much? Well grown plants that have a full root system in their pots (usually formed within two or three years), need about an inch of water a day when the temperature rises to 75 degrees and above. This is why you need to have your soil an inch or so below the edge of the pot so you can fill that space with water. For large azaleas and rhododendrons and trees you must give them an inch of water twice a day. On newly planted annuals and shrubs I use a watering can with a "flaring rose" on the spout to gently water and settle the soil.

How? If you get soil on your deck from watering, you are pouring the water too high, too hard or from too high up. *This is bad for the plants!!* You damage the

surface roots, move soil around preventing the plants from rooting well and move soil against the stems or trunks, which can suffocate your plants. When you get soil on your deck where it does not belong, it is an indication that you are not focused on your plants and their needs. Put the dipper, bucket or hose closer to the pot and slowly pour on the water. Plants pull in much of their oxygen needs from their surface roots. They need a stable soil surface.

Fertilizer . If you have a slow release fertilizer *mixed in the soil*, supplemental feeding is not necessary. Remember that these slow release products, like Osmokote, do not work on the surface. They must be constantly moist to release the fertilizer. So older plants will need a liquid feeding. You can feed every week with Rapid Grow, Miracle Grow, Shultz, or Liquinox. Follow the dilution rates on the package for weekly or every other week usage. A monthly feeding is probably not enough. If you grow tomatoes, brugmansias (angels trumpets), geraniums and most other annuals, a weekly feeding is usually best. Note: do not fertilize extremely dry plants. Often all the water and fertilizer mix will run right through or the fertilizer will burn the plant. Try to water with just enough mix to prevent spillage onto the deck or into the lake. You can foliar feed with these products on cool, cloudy days.

Watch for plants under overhangs. They won't get rain at all. The only reliable summer rain is an inch in a few hours – a rare occurrence here. A cool foggy day will reduce the water needs of some plants but not all. The best solution is to check everything and give your big plants some water anyway.



John Pursell Celebrates 50 Years on Portage Bay

By Marilyn Robertson

John Pursell grew up in the East and went to school at the University of Delaware where he graduated in 1949 in engineering. After a year at Dupont, he decided to go west. "I'd always been interested in small boats. So when I saw a magazine photo of someone canoeing on a Seattle lake, I decided to make the move." He climbed into his '41 Buick convertible and headed for Seattle. It was the summer of 1950.

In Seattle he called on a classmate from Delaware who helped him get work at Boeing. A drafting table job locating the rivet holes on aircraft wings was as boring as it sounds. He remained for a year before moving to Nickum and Sons, the designers of the Evergreen State Ferries. In 1953 he returned to Boeing into the systems analysis organization.

In those early years John lived in a rooming house, then an attic room in Laurelhurst. However, in the spring of 1954, a friend needed a summer renter for his houseboat on the Burley Moorage, located at the east end of Portage Bay. John jumped at the offer. He was surprised at how houseboat life suited him and the years have not diminished his enjoyment for living on the lake. "There is a positive isolation with an accessibility to services," John explains. "And it provides me a special contact with people. I enjoy it when someone says, 'So, you live on a houseboat.' I know I am doing something they might have wanted to do."

Just as the rental agreement ended, another houseboat on the dock went on the market. John bought it. "I couldn't really afford a land house. And without a family what did I need with a big house?" He paid \$3400 for the houseboat. The monthly moorage

fee was \$22.

Seven years later, the 34 Burley homeowners learned the city planned to destroy the moorage to make way for the 520 Freeway. Back in 1954, one landlord sold off all his houseboats, including the one John bought. "I'm suspicious he knew the freeway was coming. So he sold his rentals to unsuspecting students and young couples."

Options for the Burley houseboaters were few: locate a space on another moorage, find a houseboat to buy or rent, or leave the lake. A few houseboats, maybe six, were relocated. The city towed the others, including John's house, to Foster Island where they were burned. Determined to remain on Portage Bay, John found another houseboat. "It was cheap because, like most houseboats in those days, there was no sewer connection."

George Johnston, also living at Burley, helped John move to the new houseboat a quarter mile west. "George had a barge 4-5 feet wide, 20 feet long, which he towed with an outboard boat. One Saturday morning we made the move. It took several trips and couldn't have been easier." Then came the last load. The refrigerator. "I thought that appliance would sink the barge. But George knew what he was doing. The refrigerator was lugged onto one end of the barge. George pulled the outboard onto the other end. By now the barge was almost submerged. But, as planned, the outboard's propeller



was under water. George started the motor and we began to move. 'Nothing to it,' he said. On shore we had attracted a small gathering of neighbors. The crowd couldn't see the partially submerged barge. It looked to them as if a refrigerator floated upright and unassisted. And oblivious to the drifting appliance putted two men in a little rowboat. What a laugh George and I had." John reports the '56 refrigerator is still working.

The interest in small boats, that brought John to Seattle, took form on Burley when he designed and built his first kayak. He has continued to build test models and full-scale canoes and kayaks. During the summers, John can be seen on Portage Bay in a kayak built 10 years ago. At present he is working on another design.

In 1983 John retired from Boeing to fulfill his dream to write an historical novel. While writing, he has amassed a large collection of books, most nonfiction. Another interest is poetry, which he reads and writes.

A few houseboats, maybe six, were relocated. The city towed the others, including John's house, to Foster Island where they were burned.

Possessing a large library is difficult in a houseboat 680 square feet, so John converted an unused back room to a library. But crowding wasn't what drove him to sleep out of doors. He began spending nights on deck the summer of 1954. By fall he wondered just how long the weather would permit him to continue. Winter arrived and "maybe a total of seven really cold, windy nights" forced him indoors. Spring turned to summer and so on. For 50 years John has set up his outdoor bed. "When I close the sliding doors and settle on deck, the cares of the day remain inside the houseboat." The deck unites him with the water life. "I can watch the tugboat and barge traffic go by. Muskrats and a few raccoons pass my deck bed and I've recently seen and heard the otter."

John has a gentle nature and it is reflected in his affection for animals found on or near the water. That affection even extends to rats. "One grew fond of my bird feeder. At first she came only at night but soon she grew bold and sought seeds all day long. I preferred to feed the birds, but couldn't kill the rat. I trapped her and, after dark, released her in the north end of the city. That was Nelly 1. Then came Nelly 2. By Nelly 3, I had contrived a method of looking like a guy just returning from shopping. I carried a supermarket bag hiding the rat in a large jar. In a quiet spot, I could casually open the jar, release the rat, and continue my stroll."

John doesn't look back with nostalgia at 1950s Portage Bay. "I don't miss the old days. We knew the lake water was unsanitary. I never swam in it. Most houseboats were poorly built and cold. Because permits were difficult to get, there was no incentive to repair or remodel." John believes the clean up of lake water, the secure position of the houseboat community in Seattle, and the ability of houseboaters to modernize their homes if they choose, have improved the quality of life on the lake.



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Waterlog

By Marilyn Robertson

As I write, temperatures have risen and it feels like summer. Again. The critters adjust to the changeability of the weather better than I do. On Portage Bay this spring and summer, we have some new visitors and other old timers have come in close to take a good look at Jim and me. Early in the spring a number of Red Wing Blackbirds enjoyed sunflower seeds from a neighbor's feeder. This is their second year in our part of Portage Bay. John Pursell says there were Red Wing Blackbirds at the marshy end of Portage Bay when he lived on Burley Moorage. He was surprised and delighted to know, after all these

years, they have returned. Jim and I watched a painted turtle sun in one of our floating planters. It spent part of a week with us, then moved on. A few weeks ago, a Blue Heron stepped an adagio across our deck and elegantly speared a fish. A mob of crows



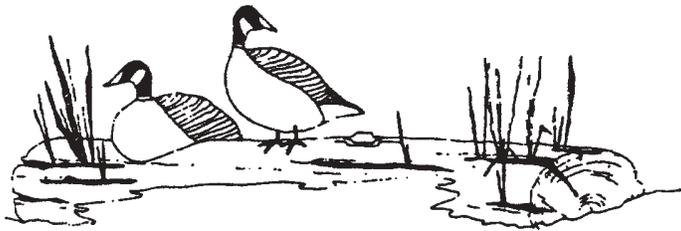
Uninvited guests

attracted our attention just the other day. They were harassing a Bald Eagle, perched on the roof of a neighboring houseboat (see cover). What's with all these crows? They scared away swallows that have nested on our porch for eight summers. The muskrat decided, in late June to munch on the Iris and Sweet Flag in Jim's water garden. Jim was so sure these plants wouldn't get eaten after early June. Unpredictability. Just part of life on the water.

PORTAGE BAY

2818 Boyer Street. Jeanette Corkery reports, "An optometrist friend with Volunteer Optical Service to Humanity (VOSH) invited me to join a nine-day trip to El Salvador as interpreter. It was a last minute deal with a few wild days of passport renewal, travel shots, meds, and so forth. We were stationed in a village, 3 hours from Salvador, the capital. For four days we conducted eye examinations and gave glasses to 1,080 people from villages deep in the forest. It was as rewarding for the VOSH team as for the people we served. The people who came to our clinic were so grateful, friendly, and polite. They treated us to many delicious meals and entertained us royally with the 'all-village band'.

One incident involved a 9-year old boy who needed a strong, strong prescription. When he looked at his mother with his new glasses, it was the first time he had seen her face clearly. The kid was ecstatic and the mother burst into tears.



Needless to say, there wasn't a dry eye among the VOSH staff."

Shelby Dock. Diana Forman has retired from Lakeside School. No trips planned yet, she wants to enjoy summer in Seattle. Betty Swift reports that Shelby Dock thinks their bit of water is quite special because of two new babies on board. Devon Biernacki was born into Krissy and Todd's household in early May. He joins little Cate Lewison, Melinda and John's daughter, who is almost six months old.

Dock Henderson. Joan Zegree and Spider Kedelsky

Photos by Sid McFarland



Victoria Slover poses with the paper wasp nest under her eaves. Bigger than most, it was a foot in diameter with a hole nearly two inches across.

have moved back into their remodeled houseboat. Joan and Spider are pleased with the house but the cats are still adjusting.

2920 Fuhrman. Katherine Hanson and Michael Schick traveled in India for the last two weeks of June. Katherine says they were lucky with the weather. The Monsoons were late in most of the regions they visited. And in June there seemed to be few international tourists. Highlights of the trip were caves near Aurangabad. The Ajanta caves, established by Buddhist monks somewhere between 2000 BC and 500AD, are famous cave paintings. Nearby, are the Hindu, Buddhist and Jain caves of Ellora. Later in the journey the couple spent several days at Bandipur National Park Wildlife Preserve, in the Nilgiri Hills. Katherine believes their trip choices allowed them a chance to experience rural India.

Note: Indian Holiday Pvt. Ltd. indianholiday@vsnl.net was a helpful service.

3100 Portage Bay Place. Joyce and Dave Black spent the month of March in Mexico. When she's not traveling, Joyce has found time to create an attractive Japanese style garden in what was a dull shore space.

LAKE UNION

Tui Tui. Shannon Kruger who lives atop the "mud" house duplex with her husband Mark, gave birth to a girl, the second native-born Tuituian. Janet Yoder's short story, "The Disorder" will be published in BAYOU, a literary publication of the University of West Florida. Janet and Robbie are involved in saving the 1908 Larson house on Eastlake. This will involve moving the house off and possibly barging it to a new site, maybe on Lake Union?

Mallard Cove. Susan Lehr, a squash player of local renown, just smashed her way into the record books at the squash nationals held recently in Seattle. She took 2nd place in the nation in her women's age group. Huzzah! The north end of the dock was broadside to the storm winds of April 27 and careened towards the shore, bending 3 pilings over in the mud. It'll be a five-figure fix once the permits are granted. Tim and Melissa Ahlers were so enthused about their fabulous new roof deck they celebrated with a roof top band on July 4th. Giff and Mary Jones took off mid-June for a two-month circumnavigation of Vancouver Island finishing with the SYC NORPAC regatta on Barkley Sound the first of August. Al Hendrickson, original owner of Mallard Cove #12, celebrated his 86th birthday in Las Vegas with friends and relatives.

FloVilla. Don and Barbara Van Nimwegen visited Vietnam and Cambodia in March and April. They took a three-day boat trip up the Mekong River to Phnom Penh and continued up the Yee Sap River to Angkor Wat. On the river trip they passed many houseboat communities. Underneath most houses were commercial fish pens. Don wonders if this could be a new home industry for Lake Union? The histori-

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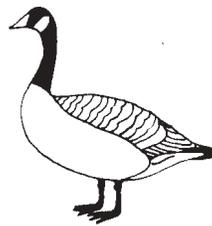
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**... more
Waterlog**

cal murals surrounding the temples at Angkor Wat and the sheer magnitude of the structures were beyond expectation.

Barbara and Don, who volunteer with Healing the Children, a non-profit organization helping children “around the corner and around the world”, worked for a week with a Plastic surgeon who performed cleft lip and palate repairs on 28 children. Another two weeks were spent exploring Vietnam. One highlight was an overnight cruise of Halong Bay in a classic junk.

Don says Vietnam has moved past the “American War” and welcomes visitors from everywhere. Food and lodging is inexpensive and travel is easy to arrange. Contact Don for information on Vietnam or Cambodia. Interested in medical trips overseas to a variety of locations? Call Don at 206-721-5729 or email donvannim@aol.com.

The Lake Union. After almost twenty-five years at 2031 FVE Keith and Ann Magnuson have a for sale sign on their recently remodeled houseboat. They have moved to a new home on the shores of Lake Washington. Alan Honick and Katherine Michaels have moved to Bainbridge Island. New owners, the Magnusson’ daughter has moved in. She attends the UW. Joyce Major is headed for a trip around the world for the next year to do volunteer work from rebuilding old castles to feeding Baboons. She is renting her water nest to Kathleen and Peter Cameron. The docks greatest traveler, Larry Logue just returned from an extensive climbing adventure in Mongolia and Korea.

Log Foundation. Jann MacFarland reports on the birds and bees, or in this instance, stories about a beaver and a wasp. “On a recent afternoon, after a swim, we were lounging around the deck when we witnessed a large Corkscrew Willow branch moving along the channel, moving too rapidly to be wind driven. Sure enough there was the beaver’s head among the branches. We yelled to Jamie Thurner, our neighbor across the channel. She went to check her small, perfectly shaped willow, which had grown from several willow stems planted few years ago. Jamie hollered back that the middle of the tree was gone and another branch broken off. To add a final touch to his vandalism, the beaver, to access the willow, had climbed into another pot and crushed Jamie’s big tomato plant. He swam down the channel to his home on the bank between 2019 and 2025. Time to chicken wire those willow trees! Several evenings later, the buck toothed old boy climbed out of the water and looked at “his” dinner— alas, it was chicken-wired in. Neighbors saw him and yelled. Jamie ran out to the dock and chased the beaver to the other side of the willow barrel. She hollered at him, but he nonchalantly sat eyeing the tree and thinking about dinner. Finally, Jamie got close enough to worry him. He skedaddled, swam across the channel and under a house.

“Victoria Slover discovered a wasp nest being constructed above her back door. We assured her that over the years mud daubers built many nests under the eaves of our houses. But when we saw her nest we all went, ‘Wow!’ It was a paper wasp nest, built in about three days and HUGE — over a foot in diameter and the construction was amazing — done in a spiral shape. It looked like a mummified head. The entry hole was about two inches in diameter. Wasps were busy entering and exiting. It was impossible to tell if they were still enlarging it. We threatened to turn Victoria over to the co-op board for building a second story bedroom onto her houseboat without a permit.”

Trek and textile trip to Bhutan: Tanya and Gerry Seligman (2017) traveled to Bhutan for a three weeks trek in April. Their arrival in Paro, coincided with the Paro Festival, an annual Buddhist event where a sacred thanka is displayed. Thousands of the faithful waited to view and touch the ancient relic. After a few days, Tanya and Gerry joined another trekker and an REI hired Bhutanese guide to climb to the “Tiger’s Nest”, an ancient monastery, reported to be the seat of Buddhism. Following this, they began the 10-day Jhomolhari Trek, which took them to 14,450 feet, over two passes. They camped much as the few nomadic peoples who live in this remote region (except for all the support staff catering to the trekkers’ needs). Near the end of the trip the group visited markets to view the spectacular textiles that everyone in Bhutan wears. It is a tradition to show off one’s skill in weaving, so a weaver wears her textiles. The craft is handed down from generation to generation and weavers take pride in creating new designs using a variety of colored threads. The results are richly colored, vibrant textiles. Their fabrics reflect the people, who Tanya found to be warm and open to outsiders.

Note: If you plan travel to Bhutan, be aware the country requires tourists to be part of an organized trip. There is no solo trekking.

Send dock news to Marilyn
at 324.1257 or email her at
Isobel.rob@earthlink.net

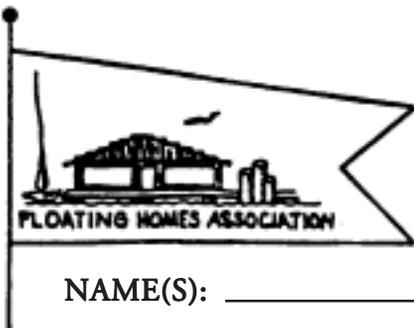


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