

# HILLTOP ACTION JOURNAL

July 2018 - Aug 2018 | Hilltop Action Coalition | volunteer organized | [www.hilltopactioncoalition.org](http://www.hilltopactioncoalition.org)

**2018** TACOMA'S  
**5th Annual** HILLTOP STREET FAIR

HILLTOP BUSINESS DISTRICT

*"Hilltop On The Move"*

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**Saturday, August 25th**  
 11am- 7pm  
 S. 9th & MLK Way -S. 13th & MLK Way  
**TACOMA, WA**  
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 Cultural Events • Quilt Show  
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### Community Priorities

- Good Jobs and Local Hires
- Safety through Community Policing
- Pathways to Home Ownership
- Sustain and Value Existing Community Organizations
- Programs for Youth and Seniors
- Peoples Center as a Cultural Hub of Information & Programs
- Create a Hilltop Neighborhood Library
- Community Journalism

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### Hilltop Action Coalition

Hilltop Action Coalition is a community-based coalition and 501(c)3 nonprofit that is working to mobilize and empower diverse individuals, families, businesses and other public and community organizations to build a safe, clean, healthy resilient and united community.

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## Hilltop Action Coalition Monthly Community Meetings 3rd Mondays @ 6pm

Community Healthcare Bldg. 1202 Martin Luther King Jr. Way

Meet your neighbors and become part of the local Hilltop community. Each month we have presentations and information about community events, activities, policy, and important news.



## Presidents Message

By Brendan Nelson

The Hilltop has gone through so much in the past few months and there's a lot I can speak on but I will keep it brief. I'd like to say how fortunate I feel to live in a community where we can have intense dialogue and not shy away from the hard questions. We are a strong, resilient community and no matter what happens we must remember the shoulders we stand on. Many great men and women have paved the way for the Hilltop to be a vibrant and thriving place to live, and I'd like for us to never lose sight of that. We still have a long journey and it's going to take all of us working together to find solutions to the most pressing needs of our community.

The issues of homelessness, affordable

housing, employment, education and health services are very critical concerns for many and I am optimistic that we can continue to make gains in these areas, but we can't give up. This work is hard, uncomfortable and disheartening but we will persevere. I personally have been disappointed by many of the things that have taken place in our community and have definitely wanted to wipe my hands of it all, but in those moments of deep frustration I am reminded of Alberta Canada, Harold Moss, Mae Harris, Pastor Brazill and countless others that kept pushing even when they were tired deep down in their souls. This is the fabric the Hilltop is cut from and for that I'm grateful.

We know that gentrification is here in the Hilltop and many African Americans are

being displaced, new businesses are coming through that don't necessarily fit the Hilltop history or where many longtime residents pictured our community moving towards, but we as a community need to continue challenging these issues each and everyday. I encourage us all to continue holding our elected officials, police department, organizations and businesses accountable, it is the only way things will move forward. Greater is coming, but not without some bumps and bruises along the way.

In service,

Brendan Nelson

# Hilltop Seeks Creative District Designation

## Will cultural center combat rising gentrification?

By Tera Williams

For a part of town that's in you, not on you with everything to lose, getting designated as a creative district is an idea worth investing in.

Most Tacomans know that Hilltop is a historically Black neighborhood. With the increased interest in the area and talks of revitalization, rents are rising and long-time Hilltop residents are being displaced. Revitalization is an interesting buzzword because from a word origin standpoint, a revitalization movement is a movement to replace the existing culture with one that is more satisfying, but more satisfying to who?

Tacoma is the kind of place where things like this often just happen and you can see them happening, but feel powerless to intervene. And that's true in this case, too. Revitalization is going to happen one way or the other. So what can we do to stop Hilltop from becoming nothing more than a gentrified shell of the community it once was? One option gaining momentum is the movement to get Hilltop designated by the state of Washington as a creative district, honoring its distinct cultural and historical significance to the Black population of Tacoma. Getting the neighborhood designated can get ahead of the "revitalization" curve and help to mitigate the impacts of continued mass displacement of Hilltop residents.

A creative district combines local



assets, arts, and culture to regenerate the social and economic fabric of the area that has been lost. Creating a plan for Hilltop as a creative district would provide a community-driven path towards revitalization that values Black people, Black culture, and the complex history of the area. It would take the existing community institutions and organizations, the story of Hilltop and its inhabitants, and combine that with creative placemaking to create a community that can incubate Black success.

Creative placemaking can sometimes be a hard pill to swallow in a community that isn't consistently accessible, doesn't have a library, and has been systemically neglected, but it means creatively leveraging a space using arts and culture. Black culture is all about informally practicing "creative placemaking." Utilizing

the existing space to uphold the importance of Black culture on the Hill is a valuable tool we can use to make the neighborhood reflect the pride we take in it. It will provide access to grant funding for neighborhood improvement, increased economic growth, and enhance the overall quality of life in Hilltop. A creative district designation will guide the direction the development of Hilltop goes in a way that relying on the city to get it done never will. It allows Hilltop to define its own narrative moving forward and use its story to create its own future.

If you're interested in more information, getting involved, or just making sure your favorite Hilltop institutions make it into the plan, contact me at Tera@iamwilter.com."

# Meet Delia Flores, supervisor of People's Community Center

By Michael Thompson

Delia succeeds Michael Bradley, who retired from Metro Parks in June

Flores, 45, was born in Mexico and moved to Texas at 13. A Bremerton resident, she relocated to the Puget Sound area from Dallas two years ago to join her husband, an acoustic engineer who works at Naval Base Kitsap – Bangor. She most recently served as supervisor of Miller Community Center on Seattle's Capitol Hill. Before that, she spent 10 years as supervisor of a pair of Dallas community centers.

## Tell us something about yourself.

"One of the things that drives me is being a public servant. I am very passionate about the work we do. I am a fast learner and eager to start building relationships with the community. I welcome suggestions and input."

## What attracted you to the position of People's Community Center supervisor?

"I was working in Seattle and the commute was taking a toll on my personal life. I looked at Tacoma and the commute is shorter. I read



the Metro Parks Tacoma strategic plan, and the direction the district is going professionally attracted me. The plan incorporates the National Recreation and Park Association pillars of sustainability — social, environmental and economic — as the best way to serve the community.

This community is going through a big transition, something I experienced in my work in Dallas where similar challenges were faced. I know I can serve the community in a way that is beneficial to the community as a whole."

## What were the specific transition issues in the Dallas neighborhoods you served?

"The demographics and the economic structure were changing. With that come changes in programming at the community center. My view is that I have to serve the community as a whole. I want to get to know the community so we can balance and honor the roots and values of the existing community with new programs that are inclusive so everybody feels welcome.

It's my challenge to learn about the community so we can serve the community as a whole, not a specific sector. I have accomplished that in the past through collaboration, both within the organization and outside groups, to identify gaps and bridge them to together serve the community."

## How do you plan to encourage more people to use People's Community Center?

"I only started working a few days ago, so this is a little early to answer that question. But I'll be working with the Metro Parks marketing team. In the future, I'd like to start an online community center newsletter. And I plan to do more outreach through community events, such as National Night Out on Aug. 7. People's hosts the program from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and we'll have a free swim session in the pool from 7 p.m. until 8 p.m."



# Fitness Classes at People's Community Center

By Adriane Kehinde-Lewis and Jennifer Schaal

Did you know the People's Community Center offers over 15 hours of fitness classes? Many community members know the People's Community Pool offers water exercise, swimming lessons and family swim. Outside of aquatics, People's Community Center also offers senior fitness classes like S.A.I.L. (Stay Active and Independent for Life). Those looking to reduce stress and learn mindful movement can try chair yoga or flow yoga class. Looking to break a sweat and have fun doing it? You can check out the dance

fitness classes like MIXED FIT and Zumba. If fitness class are not your thing, there's also fitness gym with weights and a basketball gym. No matter what you like to do to stay healthy, there's something for everyone at People's. All fitness classes are included with monthly membership (including income-based discounts and Silver Sneakers members are free) or it's just \$5 to drop in any time.

Please visit the People's Community Center website to learn more about fitness at Peoples Center! <https://www.metroparkstacoma.org/peoples-fitness/>

# LNG & Hilltop

By Norma Ramirez, Oneida Arnold, Les Pogue and Barbara Church

What does Puget Sound Energy's Liquefied Natural Gas Facility have to do with the Hilltop and why does it matter? That's the question we were asked to share when we walked into the Hilltop Action Coalition office to talk about LNG. So, I'll tell you what matters. First, did you know that PSE ratepayers will be paying at least 43% or \$133 million of the \$310 million construction costs? It'll be on every PSE ratepayer's energy bill. The most ratepayers will use is 7% of the LNG during times when it's extra cold. even though we don't need the LNG facility to provide the reserves because it's already available from PSE's Jackson Prairie Natural Gas Storage Facility in Chehalis. Besides the money factor, we also have concerns about jobs, health and safety. Who in the Hilltop is working on this project? It's supposed to provide good family wage jobs for our community. Really? When PSE laid pipe last year, the licenses on 10 out of 12 workers vehicles were from out of state. How do we know? Some of us drove past it almost every day. And jobs? There'll only be 18 full time jobs. And do you think they'll be filled by Hilltop workers? Tacoma has already experienced health harming pollution. Remember the "aroma of Tacoma" when the smelter was operational? "The LNG facility's projected greenhouse gas emissions currently assessed to be 20,751 tons per year will raise health and climate concerns" say Physicians for Social Responsibility. Puget Sound Clean Air Agency acknowledged that the facility would emit significant quantities of Volatile Organic

Compounds and Particulate Matter 2.5 pollution per year in addition to other toxic air pollutants. VOCs include benzene and other known cancer causing agents. The layer of smog from the Port of Tacoma lingers over Hilltop. According to data from the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, the prevalence of asthma in the Hilltop remains at the second highest level in the county.

People living in Hilltop are dying at significantly earlier ages than in other parts of the county. This LNG facility puts residents' health at even more risk. Historically, communities of color and tribal communities are disproportionately impacted by fossil fuel projects this size. That's the case here, just ask the Puyallup Tribe. Look at the 3 public elementary schools within a 2 mile radius. All three are majority minority schools. It's a human rights violation to have the Detention Center within 1.5 miles of the LNG Facility with no emergency escape route other than "in place cover". Puget Sound Energy knew just where to place this facility. They just picked a marginalized community. But they don't know Tacoma residents. We stand for our Hilltop Community and we stand for the Puyallup Tribe. Do we believe this project is safe? provides jobs? keeps our air and waters clean? No we do not. We want local politicians to value the health and safety of Hilltop residents before big business and fossil fuel. So why does it matter, you ask? It matters because Hilltop matters.

# Hilltop Street Fair

By Mario Lorenz

Festivals promote diversity, they bring neighbors into dialogue, they increase creativity, they offer opportunities for civic pride, they improve our general psychological well-being. In short, they make cities better places to live. --David Binder

The street fair in its infancy had nothing but courage, caution, and a whole lot of heart to move it to realization from its humble beginnings of three small concerts scattered throughout the summer of 2013. It truly was a product of "Hilltop Heat". Hilltop was healing and heating up in a good way.

It is different now as we move into our fifth year with growth, a feeling of pride, a deep love for our district's community, and a history of cooperation and success as our modus operandi. The Tacoma Chamber of Commerce found us worthy of a first place award for the best activation of a public park, open space or area within the public right of way. Two years ago the street fair received a NUSA (Neighborhoods USA) Award. The Hilltop Street Fair is an award-winning event. We are seeing the fruits of our labor, and the David Binder quote is coming true for Hilltop. It is in part because of events like this that neighborhoods and cities are transformed for the better.

The 5th annual 2018 Hilltop Street Fair, at the district president's request, will have a parade at 11 AM on Saturday August 25th with the Buffalo Soldiers leading with a color



guard. Excitement fills the air. The parade will start forming at 9:45 AM at Peoples Community Center on 17th and begin at 11 AM moving along MLK and through the street fair and continuing to 10th and into People's Park for an opening ceremony. Participants will need to fill out an entry form which is in this publication and will be available elsewhere.

What more is in store for the 5th annual 2018 Street Fair?

There's a circus tent planned in the empty lot across from Hilltop Loans sponsored by Bill Korum Nissan and BASRA in partnership with Sound

Transit. The established Black Top Rebel's Vintage Car Show will once again be in the Rite Aid lot. The Peterson Brothers will again produce the 1111 Stage. The Peoples Park Unity stage sponsored by KTBC, also in partnership with Sound Transit will be alive with bands, hip-hop, and other entertainment. Along with our usual children's activities, there will be a surprise sponsor that will add a new dimension to the children's activities in Peoples Park. Mr. Mac's Stage sponsored by the Community Health Plan of Washington will have several bands and the always remarkable fashion show. The Unity through Diversity

Quilt Show will be housed at Allen AME. The film competition this year is at the Community Health Care Community Room. Centro Latino will have a market across the street in the Tacoma Housing Authority parking lot, and a Columbian Band will play just outside. A Reggae Band will perform at Quickie Two at 14th street - our newest expansion of the street fair. There will be roving entertainers and at this time we have as many vendors as were with us last year. The food court will begin on 10th and stretch around on L street almost to 11th. There are plans for an Art Piano donated by Prosser that will be painted by neighborhood children

and then available to be played during the Street Fair. We will even engage the Tacoma Opera to express extraordinary vocal prowess.

The Parade will be a big deal as we have no idea if it will be the first and maybe the last parade for the Street Fair as we begin welcoming preparations for the Link Rail to appear in our district. Perhaps this parade will become another transforming beginning of a wonderful tradition that will make its mark and leave us forever changed for the better.

# Links to Opportunity Streetscape Improvements Project Update

By Andy Micklow, AICP

The City of Tacoma's Links to Opportunity Streetscape Improvements Project ("the Project") is engaging the community to help redesign the sidewalk and pedestrian areas—the streetscape—along 1.4 miles of the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension route. The word streetscape, in this case, refers to both the location and the visual effect of improvements like seating, lighting, landscaping, art, color, and other design elements. After 12 months of community engagement, engineering, and design work, the Project is in its final design phase which is the detail and fine-tuning stage. We have engaged with the community to learn generally what type of streetscape elements are desired and in what locations. For example, we have heard that seating should be concentrated near transit stops and in business districts. The design should be durable, prioritize safety, and promote active spaces. Now we are diving deeper into the details of design and asking questions about the layout of street chairs, for example. Are they more usable angled towards each other or facing the sidewalk?

The Links to Opportunity design team is also refining the design theme for the streetscape. Through our community engagement, we have also heard that the streetscape design should reflect the vibrant character and history of the communities along Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Division Avenue, and North 1st Street. The proposed design highlights places in

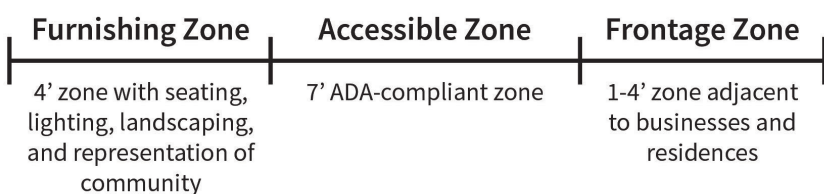
the streetscape where people come together to form community. The areas where people stop or gather—at benches, chairs, game tables, and lean rails—are highlighted with color and specialty paving. These

'welcome mats' provide a durable and continuous, repeating element of visual interest that celebrates the community and encourages communal spaces. You can learn more these design elements and other

details about the streetscape project by visiting the project webpage at [cityoftacoma.org/links](http://cityoftacoma.org/links) or by stopping by the Hilltop project office at 1120 South 11th Street. The Links to Opportunity project team will also

be out in the community during the Hilltop Street Fair and intermittently during July and early August. Stop by and share your feedback with us to help shape the public spaces in your community.

**Example Sidewalk**  
Links to Opportunity Streetscape Improvements Project



# Poverty Report Reveals Continual Struggle for Low-income Working Families

By Katherine Ransom

Two years ago, United Ways of the Pacific Northwest first introduced ALICE in our state. ALICE is a United Way acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed - hard working people who still struggle to make ends meet. Ever since, United Ways have been working to “put a face on ALICE” and to lead efforts to help ALICE families achieve financial security in our communities.

ALICE is a large population of residents who have incomes above the Federal Poverty Level but below the cost of living threshold. ALICE is employed, but has difficulty affording the basic necessities of housing, food, childcare, health care and transportation.

The ALICE Project is a grassroots movement that seeks to redefine financial hardship in the U.S. by providing comprehensive, unbiased data to help inform policy solutions at all branches of government and in business, academia and nonprofit organizations. Launched by the United Way of Northern New Jersey at the start of the Great Recession, the research is being embraced by United Ways in 18 states, with more expected to join next year. United Ways and partners are using the data to develop policies, allocate resources and address community needs.

“Despite seemingly positive economic signs, the ALICE data shows that financial hardship is still a pervasive problem,” said Project Director Stephanie Hoopes, Ph.D., who leads the data analysis.

“This research dispels long-standing myths about financial instability by showing that ALICE families exist in every community and among all ages, races and ethnicities,” Hoopes added.

The new Washington statewide ALICE Update Report indicates that

28% of households in Washington are now on a financial tightrope – and in Pierce County 31% are struggling. The new report calculates an updated “Household Survival Budget” specific to our county, which amounts to \$25,007 for single adults and \$72,324 for two adults, one infant and one preschooler.

According to Dona Ponepinto, CEO of United Way and a member of the Governor’s Poverty Reduction Work Group, “The cost of living continues to increase and the Household Survival Budget reflects the bare minimum that a household needs to live and work today. That does not include savings for emergencies or future goals like college.”

“Last year we set a bold goal to lift 15,000 households out of poverty by 2028. This has informed our work to focus on two key strategies. We are ensuring people have access to basic needs through South Sound 2-1-1. This helps them stabilize and move into self-sufficiency. Our Center for Strong Families reaches people in low-income neighborhoods so they can get and keep better paying jobs and improve long-term economic mobility.”

In 2016, costs were well above the Federal Poverty Level of \$11,880 for a single adult and \$24,300 for a family of four. Family costs increased by 28 percent statewide from 2010 to 2016, compared to 9 percent inflation nationally.

Ponepinto explained that the way we live is changing. There are so many different family and living combinations than ever before—including more people living alone, with roommates and more adult children living with parents. Families with children are changing because there are more blended families with remarried parents, more non-married cohabiting parents, and more same-sex parents. The number of senior households is also increasing.



“Yet all types of households continue to struggle. There are ALICE and poverty-level households across all of these living arrangements so paying attention to what people need includes respect for diversity, equity and inclusion,” notes Ponepinto.

Employment and wages vary by location and firm size, but across the state, more than half of newly hired workers earn less than the cost of the family Household Survival Budget. Small firms (<50 employees) often drive economic growth but their wages tend to be lower, especially in rural areas where they are the largest employers. Large firms (500+ employees) offer higher wages but are concentrated in cities, where the cost of living is also higher. Medium-size firms (50-500 employees) pay more but employ the fewest workers.

#### The Household Survival Budget includes:

- Housing: HUD’s Fair Market Rent (40th percentile)
- Child Care: Registered Family Child Care Homes
- Food: Thrifty Level (lowest of four levels) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Plans – with regional variation
- Transportation: Car expenses include gas and motor

oil and other vehicle maintenance expenses from Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES)

- Health Care: nominal out-of-pocket health care spending, medical services, prescription drugs from Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES)

- Technology: smart phone using Consumer Reports “Best Low-Cost Cell-Phone Plans”

- Miscellaneous: 10 percent of the total (including taxes) to cover cost overruns

“The goal of the ALICE Report is to share this information consistently so that over time, it can become the standard measure used by nonprofit, government, business and academic institutions to define financial insecurity. We’d like to change the common vernacular from “working poor” to “ALICE”. We hope this will shift the public policy agenda from poverty and amelioration to ALICE and systemic change so that all families can meet their basic needs and we want to recognize the value of all jobs by ensuring that all those who work to keep our local economies running can support their families,” adds Ponepinto.

#### About the United Way ALICE Project

The United Way ALICE Project is a collaboration of United Ways in Connecticut, Florida, Hawai‘i, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. The Project has developed standardized measurements that provide a comprehensive look at financial hardship across the U.S. With this data, Project members work to stimulate a fresh, nonpartisan dialogue across the country about the importance and fragility of working families living paycheck to paycheck.

About United Way: United Way of Pierce County has a bold goal to lift 15,000 households out of poverty and into financial stability by 2028. We will achieve this by mobilizing local businesses, community organizations, governmental agencies and individuals, to make a long-term measurable difference in our community. Together, we are creating a stronger community. To learn more or to join our fight against poverty in Pierce County, visit [www.uwpc.org](http://www.uwpc.org).

# National Night Out

By Kaitlan Ohler, Safe Streets and HAC staff

Let’s celebrate National Night Out together! National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, better places to live. National Night Out is celebrated by spending the

evening outside; hosting block parties, festivals, parades, cookouts and other community events with safety demonstrations, seminars, youth events, visits from emergency personnel and exhibits.

“National Night Out provides a perfect opportunity for people to get to know their neighbors, connect with law enforcement and continue the important work of making all neighborhoods in Pierce County safe, clean and healthy,” said Priscilla

Lisicich, Executive Director of Safe Streets Campaign. Tuesday, August 7, join 38 million people in over 16 thousand communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide enjoying themselves at National Night Out. In Pierce County, diverse communities come together to produce unique celebrations with neighbors, elected officials and law enforcement, making a statement against crime.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT is

designed to:

- Engage community members to prevent crime;
- Generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime programs like Safe Streets;
- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships; and
- Encourage neighbors to meet one and another and strengthen relationships

National Night Out is nationally sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch (NATW), Ring, Ditez & Watson and Associates. The event is coordinated locally by Safe Streets, and local partners including the Hilltop Action Coalition, Metro Parks, and others. National Project Coordinator, Matt Peskin said, “This is a night for America to stand

together and promote awareness, safety, and neighborhood unity. National Night Out showcases the vital importance of police-community partnerships and citizen involvement. When law enforcement and the community work closely together, some amazing things can happen.”

A list of local National Night Out parties will be available on Safe Streets’ website ([www.safest.org](http://www.safest.org)) by July 27th. For more information contact the Safe Streets office at 253.272.6825 or email Kaitlan Ohler at [kohler@safest.org](mailto:kohler@safest.org). You can also find out about events on the Hilltop by calling the HAC office at 253-442-8848 or emailing [hacoffice15@gmail.com](mailto:hacoffice15@gmail.com)

# Take Me Out to the Ballgame!

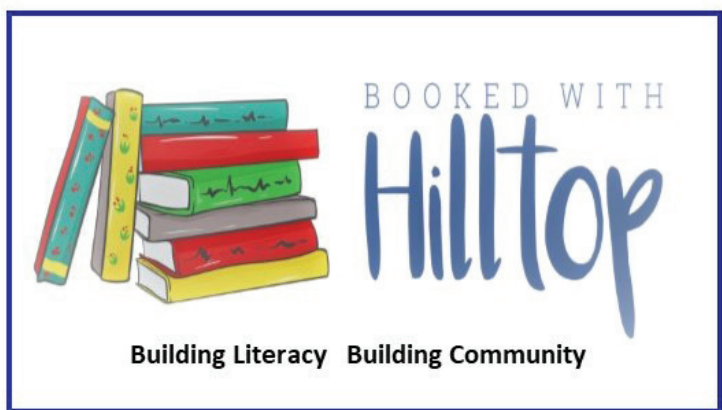
By Kris Brannon

Well it's that time of year again. It was the Rainiers biggest game of the year, the annual July 3rd spectacular celebrating our nation's independence. With a big fireworks show after the game, it's always a sell out. The crowd was ready for some amazing baseball and didn't leave disappointed. The Rainiers put on a clinic winning their game against the Reno Aces 11-4. They scored a season high: six runs in the third inning and tied a 2018 best at five games over .500. The Rainiers improved to a 8-1 winning record over the last nine July 3rd games. Also of note - Manager Pat Listach moved into 5th place for wins as a manager of the franchise.

The Tacoma Rainiers are a great way to enjoy the community. For more information, please contact TacomaRainiers.com



## Booked with Hilltop Nurtures Literacy



By Mary Cogger

We have many agencies working to make Tacoma a better place to live. Peace Community Center conducts after school and summer programs on the Hilltop. Graduate Tacoma has the vision, "A Tacoma where every child succeeds in school, career and life." They partner with many agencies around the community including Tacoma Public Schools to accomplish their goal. There are more too numerous to name.

How then, can we benefit from another non-profit on the hill? Academic markers are rising, but we still have need for more progress. Booked with Hilltop (BwH) offers a way to help our children raise their literacy and academic progress. Current research correlates literacy development and education with access to and ownership of books. The small start up has big plans to create a Hilltop community culture of literacy through a neighbor-driven, book distribution system. We want to have books in every household. Some other organizations are already providing free books, but many are left out. BwH will fill the gaps.

A study from the University of Nevada (Evans et al. 2010) states that, "Even a little bit goes a long way, in terms of the number of books in a home. Having as few as 20 books in the home still has a significant impact on propelling a child to a higher level of education, and the more books you add, the greater the benefit." Do you

have books in your home? Books for all ages? Booked with Hilltop is a great source of free new and lightly used books.

Tacoma Community House is partnering with BwH for a family reading night and book giveaway August 2nd from 6-8 P.M. Another large public event is The Hilltop Street Fair on August 25th. We will also have children in summer programs choose a book in celebration of their participation. And then there is another weekly activity, reading to preschoolers & providing books to take home. Tacoma Tool Library has offered to make Book Boxes, a street side place to select books for free. Free Little Libraries say to bring books to replace those taken. Booked with Hilltop does not have that expectation.

On the other hand, if you have lots of gently used books at home, you are encouraged to donate to BwH. How else can you help? Host and/or sponsor a Book Box, volunteer, check Facebook for some of our many opportunities. If you like to write grants, you help could us seek funding. We are small and need to support our mission. How can you help?

## "Nettie Asberry, My Hero"

By Vivian MacBain

"This piece was the winning submission to Bringing Tacoma's History to Life: Youth Historical Fiction Competition, a partnership between City of Tacoma Historic Preservation Office, Write253, and Creative Colloquy. The competition provided students with four prompts about lesser-known moments in Tacoma's History. Young writer Vivian MacBain responded to a prompt about Nettie Asberry, which focused on the letter that the civil rights pioneer wrote to a Tacoma newspaper to protest the showing of Birth of a Nation in 1916. In addition to being one of the first Black women to receive a PhD., Nettie Asberry founded the first branch of the West of the Rockies and the Tacoma City Association of Colored Women's Clubs. She lived for decades in a house in Hilltop at the corner of M Street and South 13th, where she taught music to generations of young students." - Anneka Olson

Hi. My name is Josephine, but everybody calls me Josie. I am 11 years old and my favorite color is royal purple. We just got a new puppy named Spot. I know. Not very original, but he is a Dalmatian! I couldn't help it! Anyway, my daddy told me that I had to train him to "go" outside. So, I did some research in the library and found out that if you use old newspapers to train your dog to "go" on them, you can then put the newspapers outside and get your dog used to that environment. Then you can take the newspapers away altogether and boom (that is a phrase I use - it means "and then suddenly") you have a trained dog! But it turns out that dogs cannot read the dates on the newspapers after they have been trained to "go" on them. So, guess what Spot did? He did what he was trained to do and "went" on the wrong newspaper. I told him after that the newspaper he "went" on said August 16th, 1916, and that the one he was supposed to go on says August 15th, 1916. I think he took my lesson to heart (or he is just your average, run-of-the-mill dog who can't read or understand English). But either way, Daddy asked me to get him a new, clean newspaper to



Portrait of Nettie Asberry (1865-1968) by Thomas Sims, hanging in Music Room, Tacoma Association of Colored Women's Clubs

read. So I set off for the corner to get a newspaper for Daddy (and a few for Spot).

My good friend Billy was selling the newspapers down at the corner. I gave him 2 cents for the current newspaper and he gave me a few old unsold newspapers from the day before for Spot. As I walked home from the corner, an editorial about Nettie Asberry caught my eye, so I started to read it. The editorial starts talking about the film coming out called Birth of a Nation. My daddy says that film is supposed to be really good. But from what the article states, the film seems very racist. My daddy would probably be appalled by it, really. But I kept reading to find more out about this Nettie Asberry. Turns out, she was one of the founders of a club called the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (the NAACP). Nettie Asberry is against the film Birth of a Nation because it portrays her people as mean and dangerous. And I agree with her! I mean, we just got past one of the hardest times in our nation! We had just eliminated SLAVERY! We had just made amends with members of the Black community. We had just agreed that everyone is equal. If the film gets out, we might have to start all over! Nettie was chosen to write a letter to the press to make sure the film does not get out. The letter, unfortunately, was not enough to stop the film from showing. But, it was enough

to bring attention to the NAACP and, most importantly, caused a debate. An important debate. A debate that both Mayor Fawcett and the Tacoma City Council had to get involved with. Nettie and a few other NAACP members made a wonderful argument. They talked about how it badly portrayed Black people and how it was untrue to history. After about an hour, the debate was declared a draw.

As soon as I finished the editorial, I ran home to tell my daddy about it (And to make sure Spot had enough newspapers) I told my daddy and my mommy about the editorial. I really hope that Nettie wins the debate after all and that Birth of a Nation never gets shown. I also hope that we keep moving forwards on treating everyone as equals. Maybe we will even go to school together one day! My only question is, will Tacoma be ready? I know I am, but is everyone else?

-Josie

Vivian's MacBain's entry, Nettie Asberry, My Hero is about Nettie Asberry's letter to the press in August, 1916. Vivian MacBain is 11 years old and in 5th grade at Geiger Montessori. She has lived in Tacoma her whole life. To learn more about Nettie Asberry, see the essay by Mary T. Henry at [historylink.org/file8632](http://historylink.org/file8632).

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# Peoples of the Hilltop -the MLK Mural

By Jo Davies

Mural artist, Bob Henry, believes “that art becomes a matter of community pride and insures the community values and appreciates what they can call “their own.”

His “A Dream Coming True” mural at the corner of 9th and MLK Jr. Way (907 South MLK Jr. Way) certainly brings that philosophy home for the Hilltop. The mural represents the waves of immigrants who came to the Hilltop and made it their home. To do this, Henry has represented the diverse, multicultural, and multi-ethnic characteristics of the Hilltop.

The mural, is a composite of designs submitted by ten or twelve local residents and selected by a committee of Hilltoppers. Most of the immigrant groups are represented by their costumes, food, spiritual icons, and customs. The individuals depicted are not actually local residents but are influential members of cultures represented in Hilltop - Martin Luther King, Jr. dominates and Cesar Chavez gazes at the viewer from the lower right corner. According to Mr. Henry who was the sole painter, he painted Martin Luther King, Jr. using a mirror image of the famous photograph. The pointillist portrait of the father and son is a copy of an image that one of the committee

members insisted be included in the final work. There are two locals represented in the mural: one is the two-year-old granddaughter of the artist, the other the daughter of Carol Wolfe, who was the City staff member who spearheaded the project.

The artist has further rooted this work in Hilltop history by representing some of our most iconic buildings - some of them soon to be transformed. There’s the sketch of Valhalla Hall which is currently being transformed by the City into a mixed use building, Next is the building on the NW corner of South 11th and MLK, the Courtney Building is historically a mixed-use building, it currently houses Hilltop Loans and other retail spaces below and apartments above. Across the street is the Alberta Canada Building currently shrouded by scaffolding as Tacoma Housing Authority restoration progresses. The final building depicted is Normanna Hall on the corner of 15th and MLK. In continuous use by the Sons of Norway, it looked very much as it does today.

The mural was commissioned by the City as part of the Music and Murals event that was the brainchild of Jeff Robinson who was then the Upper Tacoma Main Street Business Program; he has recently returned and is now the Community and



Photo Credit: Raimundo Jurado

Economic Development Director for the City of Tacoma.

Painted over a four month period in 1996, an important feature of this important portrayal of Hilltop history is that the mural is portable, it’s painted on fiber reinforced canvas so it can be removed in the

event of relocation or reconstruction. Mr. Henry mentored local youth in helping to bring this project to fruition and, during the 1996 Music and Murals event, a number of local residents were involved in painting plywood embellishments for the murals. These embellishments, one of which depicted Mr. Henry on a

ladder, have since had to be removed. If you were part of this project, we love to hear from you. Please call (253-442-8848) or email the HAC office at hacoffice15@gmail.com.

# Trains Quilt Shop Hilltop’s Hidden Gem

By Mary Cogger

Although Trains Fabrics Etc opened in 1999, it remains relatively unknown. The outside looks small and unassuming, but walk inside and you will be amazed. I have lived on the Hilltop for quite a few years and do a fair share of sewing, but just recently learned about Trains by word of mouth. The owner, Donna Dvork, does not advertise and the shop is on a quiet block removed from the Hilltop business district.

Upon entrance, the visitor sees rows and rows of beautiful fabrics. The variety, selection, and quality of fabrics astound. It can take over an hour to get around the store. Besides the rainbow of fabrics, you will find a large selection of books, and two coveted long arm quilting machines. Donna also sells kits that she designs and assembles herself. The cost of

all in the store is reasonable, but if you love fabric, you will be tempted to spend more than you predicted. The long arm quilting machines are available to rent if you have purchased fabric from the shop. And, if you choose to have your quilt top quilted, you can have it done by one of several talented quilters.

Another remarkable quality of Trains Fabrics Etc is the warm, friendly atmosphere. Many customers are talented quilters and happy to share ideas and advice. People volunteer to help clean up or even cashier. Every other Friday Trains hosts a potluck open to all who come, women and men. The night I went underlined the friendly feeling of the store. People laughed, joked, and shared projects. It reminded me of a family gathering and more than one person came with family members.

If Trains is the gem, then Donna is

the jewel. She does not offer classes but will help anyone with anything. One customer described her as a gracious teacher. “If you’re interested in fabric art, Donna is a wonderful resource,” noted Elizabeth Burris. A community minded woman, Donna has given generously to help others, but does not bring it up herself. “She is an unsung hero of the Hilltop,” stated Elizabeth Burris.

Ms. Burris, an enthusiastic customer and friend, had other important message she urged me to include. “It is important to support our local treasure. Support local business.” Business hours are Tuesday - Friday 10 am to 6 pm. Trains Fabrics Etc is located at 1315 S. 23rd Street. Come visit this Hilltop community hub.



“Village Flair” quilt by A'donna Richardson

## Habitat Challenge: Over the Top

By Kris Brannon

On September 8th Tacomas Habitat for Humanity is offering the Habitat Challenge. At the Hotel Murano 75 brave people will go over the edge of the 245 foot tall Hotel Murano to raise money for affordable housing. \$50 reserves you a spot and then you need to fundraise at least \$1,000 to get to the roof and make the climb. The Hilltop Action Journals’ own Kris “Sonic Guy” Brannon will participate in this amazing community event. For more information please go to [tpc-habitat.org/TheHabitatChallenge](http://tpc-habitat.org/TheHabitatChallenge)



# Creating Opportunities in Hilltop

By Christina Butcher

Few neighborhoods in Tacoma inspire conversations about positive change, economic growth or business opportunity as easily as Hilltop. The neighborhood has been quietly gaining economic and community momentum over the last few years, although it's poised to experience more rapid growth as the City of Tacoma implements "Opportunity Zone" status and benefits on the neighborhood later this year.

The Hilltop neighborhood, specifically the area from South 7th St. to 19th St. and L St. to Court F (including Martin Luther King Jr Way) is one of six census tracts in Tacoma to officially become an Opportunity Zone as of last April. The Opportunity Zone status will grant Hilltop investors with special, federal tax breaks meant to stimulate development and job creation in the area.

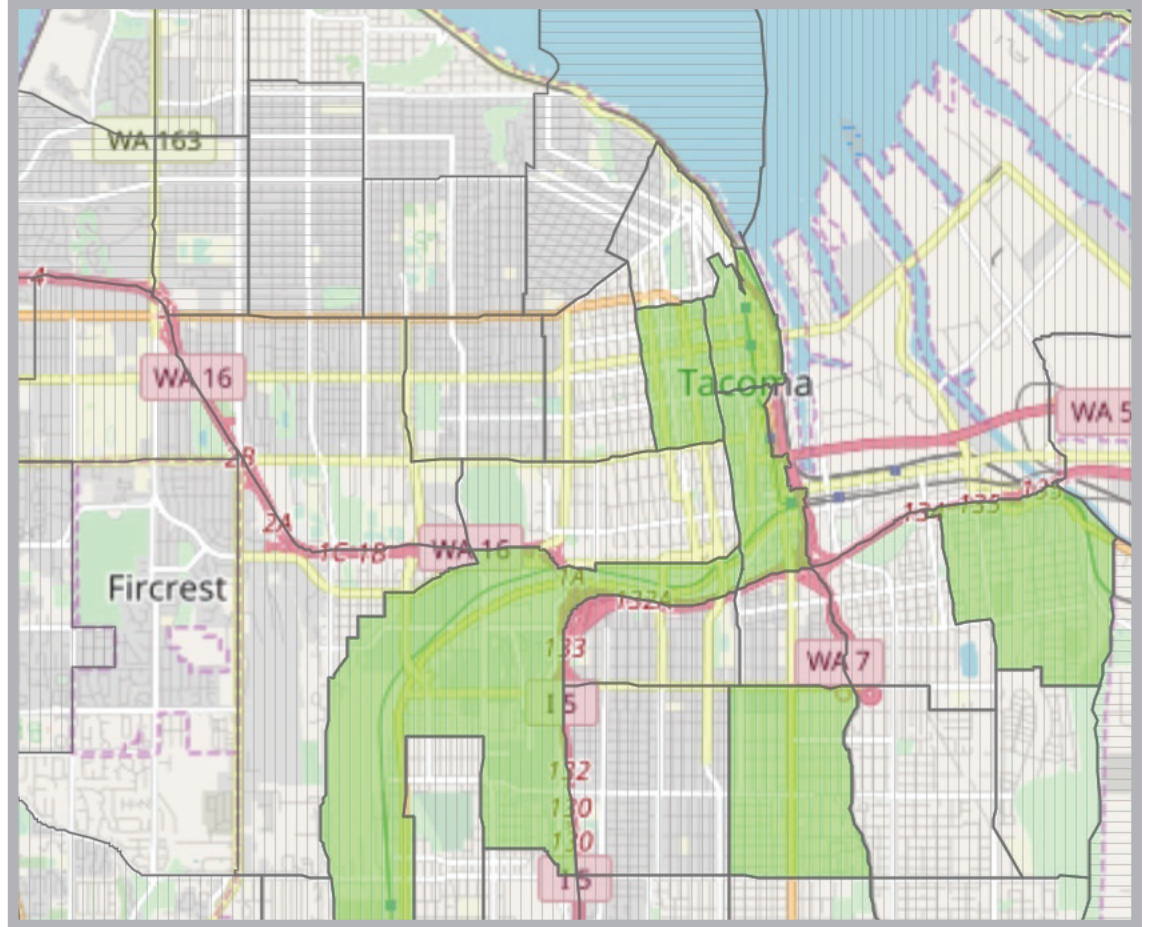
"This could generate more investment and capital in communities (like Hilltop) across the United States," said Ellen Walkowiak, Assistant Director of City of Tacoma Community & Economic Development Department.

"The private sector is very much in the driver seat with this program." But what exactly is an Opportunity Zone?

Simply put, it's an area defined economically as low-income, and one which can benefit greatly from economic investment and development. The overarching Opportunity Zone program further defines an Opportunity Zone as an area with a poverty rate of at least 20% and a median family income of up to 80% of the surrounding area. The intent of the program is to draw investors to Opportunity Zones to stimulate local economy. Major incentives to potential investors include:

- Temporary deferral of taxes on capital gains if invested into approved "opportunity funds"
- Step-up tax breaks of up to 15% of capital gains for continuous investment over long periods of time (five to seven years)
- Permanent exclusion from taxable income from capital gains if continuous investment is held for at least 10 years.

Those who make investments in an opportunity zone need not live within its boundaries to benefit from its zone



status.

"The idea is that the longer you keep your investment in a particular project ... the less you'll pay in capital gains tax on profits made," said Walkowiak. "So, for people who earn a lot of income through the sale of property, stock, bonds or things like that, investing in an Opportunity Zone is a great way to gain a tax shelter and invest in profitable projects in areas around the country which really do need more revitalization."

While federal guidance regarding

how to implement Opportunity Zone incentives hasn't been released yet, details are expected to be announced this fall.

"It's a very complicated program," said Walkowiak. "Right now, we're at the preliminary stages of trying to understand exactly what it means."

The Opportunity Zone program, which was passed by congress last December, is a part of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs act. Wash. Governor Jay Inslee approved Opportunity Zones specific to Washington State – and subsequently, Tacoma – last

April.

The five other Tacoma neighborhoods to receive Opportunity Zone status are the Old City Hall area, the Tacoma Mall/Nalley Valley area, University of Washington Tacoma (UWT)/ Brewery District, Lincoln District and the East Tacoma area.

"What we have to do as a local community is demonstrate that we have projects to invest in which can help investors make a profit, and which are also good for the community," concluded Walkowiak.



## The Annual Hilltop Neighborhood Clean Up

By Staff

On July 21st, the Hilltop community gathered together to clean out their garages and clean up their yards, streets and alley and build community spirit, and have a little fun in the process! Hilltop Action Coalition Board member Greg Walker, organized a cadre of thirty volunteers to help residents unload their trash and also drive through the neighborhoods, picking up moldering mattresses, abandoned TVs, and other unsightly debris. He reports that "everybody got plenty of exercise and displayed a sense of camaraderie as we all pitched in to make the Hilltop a more beautiful place to live."

This event came together through the hard work of not only volunteers but city offices and representatives. Alex Gibilisco from the Neighbor-

hood and Community Based Services, and the City's Solid Waste department as well as many other city offices worked in unison to bring this program to life! Walker says that his job was made simple due to support from the city, "Tacoma is extremely blessed to have such dedicated, helpful civil servants in our city offices."

The city of Tacoma is now accepting applications for 2019 community clean up events. As Walker said "It really doesn't take a lot of time to pull off something this big if we all do what we can."



# What goes on behind those windowless walls?



By Kathy Steiner

You know the place: on the corner of 13th and MLK Jr Way sits an unassuming building. Inside is a flurry of activity that begins each day long before most of us are even awake. Tacoma Tofu was founded in 1985 by Jim VanWie, retired program coordinator at McNeil Island, and his son-in-law Ron Johnson who serves as Vice President. Ron's mother in law is Japanese, and felt that Jim needed something to keep him busy in retirement. Her sister got the equipment from Japan and it arrived in Jim's driveway in boxes. Ron, being mechanically inclined, put it together. A tofu master was sent from Japan to teach Ron how to make tofu. "It's not an exact recipe that you follow" says Ron, "It is more of an art that you learn. Some days the beans need more water, or less, or the temperature may be different in the

summer vs the winter, so it is not an exact science to know how to make the tofu from day to day". Ron states that he figured out his own way of doing things through experimentation, until he hit upon the right formula. Originally located in Lakewood on Bridgeport Way, they needed a larger space that could be set up for production with minimal effort. Previously housing Masterpiece Meats, a meat processing facility, the Hilltop location was almost perfect. It was larger, had walk-in refrigeration space, could accommodate the boiler steam environment, and had drains in the floor for the large amounts of water used in the production of the tofu. They literally took down the boiler in Lakewood on a Friday, and moved it and all of the other equipment to Hilltop to begin production Monday morning. The company purchases eight hundred 66 pound bags of non-GMO soybeans from a farm in Garden City,

MO every month or so. They currently produce 4,000 packages per day! They sell only wholesale to distributors who in turn sell to grocery stores such as Saar's and Uwajimaya. They feel that they have a superior product. "We are a thorn in other company's sides" says Dave, Ron's brother. "Our quality is the best, we are able to keep up with demand, and we are able to produce and deliver same day". When the workers arrive at 5am, they begin processing soybeans that were placed in a large container to soak in fresh water the night before. The beans are drained and placed in a hopper where they are then ground, using even more water, until it becomes a slurry. The slurry is then moved to a kettle where it is cooked to 212 degrees. At this point the bean hulls or skins need to be skimmed off; this is done by passing the slurry through a screen. The skins are not wasted, they are given to a farmer who feeds it to

his animals. At this point sea salt and calcium sulfate are added to bring the mixture to the correct consistency. The mixture is now poured into forming trays from large stainless steel buckets. In the early years, Ron would perform this step using a ladle. Can you imagine how long that took? Once in the forming trays, the mixture is pressed, separating the curds from the whey. The trays are then cut to size using specially designed knives that were created. They are now ready for packaging. Tacoma Tofu currently owns the building but they need to move as they need more space. Production continues to grow and they are finding it hard to keep up with the demand. Although they will continue to use the original equipment from Japan, they would likely implement a second shift in order to accommodate the increase in production. The equipment would be cleaned after

the first shift, and then the whole process would start over again. The company employs 8 people, most of whom live on the Hilltop. Asked if the employees will follow the company to the new location, Ron sat up and exclaimed "I certainly hope so. I have a really big heart and I care about the employees." Ron works in the business every day despite 3 battles with cancer. Even from his hospital bed he was there to help his brother Dave with issues that arose in the factory that day. Next time you are at the grocery store be sure to look for a fresh or fried package of Tacoma Tofu. The high quality water in Tacoma makes Tacoma Tofu a treat, and having sampled a freshly made package myself I will definitely continue to support this family owned business.



## Hilltop Library Planning Committee

By Bil Moss

Over four years ago, service providers, organizational and agency representatives, and concerned citizens met to address the loss of library services to the Hilltop Community caused by the closure/sale of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library.

Four Community Cafes, including over 120 persons, committed to advocacy and to working to acquire a physical library space with programming that would emphasize the arts and multi-generational programming comparable to the service levels in the rest of Tacoma and Pierce County. General comments of the Cafes indicated citizens were anxious to get started on the projects and the last Café meeting was concluded with the statement, "why wait, let us assess our strengths and do something now; let us create something better than what we had"!

Committees were formed to oversee and coordinate the work required. In addition to forming work groups with targeted objectives and actions, a decision was made that it was important to continue the community

dialogues. Participants explored the ideas of working with children in Kindergarten through Third Grade and exchanging knowledge between youth who are fluent in digital devices with those elders whose wisdom would be of value to parents of young people and early learners. Thus, the Hilltop Library Planning Committee (HLPC) was born!

The Hilltop Library Planning Committee has worked long and tirelessly holding bi-monthly planning, community, and other sessions addressing the Vision, Mission, and Values of the community as derived from the citizens of the Hilltop Community. Committee members have engaged in numerous meetings of the Tacoma City Council, Tacoma City Manager, Tacoma Public Library Board of Directors, employees of the Tacoma School District, Directors of Tacoma Housing Authority, Metro Park District, and Tacoma's Faith Community. HLPC members have discussed, on various occasions, the issues, needs, timing, culture, programming, equity and equality. HLPC members have participated in tools to enhance better communication and understanding, including festivals, letters, fly-

ers, posters, surveys, programming, and establishment of a new website.

THE PRESENT  
The Tacoma City Council will be addressing its mid-term budget over the next few months. There may consideration of budget ramifications for Tacoma Public Library. It is imperative that concerned citizens are present at every opportunity to express the need and desire to procure a library facility in the Hilltop Community.

Thanks so much for your assistance in this matter.  
Bil Moss, Chairperson  
Hilltop Library Planning Committee

More information can be obtained by attending the monthly meetings as follows:  
2nd Thursdays 10AM @ Red Elm Café, 1114 MLK, Jr. Way  
4th Thursdays 6PM (June-September), 5PM (October - May) @ Allen Russell Conference Center, 1321 MLK, Jr. Way and by accessing our website: [tacomahilltoplibrary.org](http://tacomahilltoplibrary.org).

## 2018 TACOMA'S HILLTOP STREET FAIR



Saturday August 25 from 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM

Featuring local music on the Community Health Plan of Washington Stage On the Corner of MLK Jr. Way and Earnest S. Brazill St.

Thrett Brown: 11:00 AM-11:30 AM



Mr. Blackwatch: 11:45 AM-12:30 PM



Flor De Luna: 12:50 PM-1:45 PM



Hilltop Street Fair Fashion Show: 2:00 PM-3:30 PM



Sister Madame: 3:50 PM-4:40 PM

Libraries Rock! Celebrating Community and Diversity in the 253: 5:00 PM-6:00 PM



### Hilltop Street Fair Fashion Show - In Memory of Mr. Mac -

Saturday August 25 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Community Health Plan of Washington Stage On the Corner of MLK Jr. Way and Earnest S. Brazill St.

Featuring Clothing & Designs by:

- Mr. Mac • Poppy Seed Clothing • Dorene Ruffin
- Reused and Recycle • Channing Baby and Co.

Hair and Make-up by: Summit Salon Academy

Models from: Top Model Boot Camp & Sound Movement Arts Center (SMAC)



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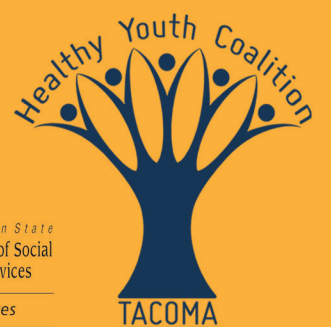
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# Community Social Services Colleagues Bring Art to Hilltop Street Fair

By Kristie Worthey

Colleagues who work in social services are coming together to share their print making, sketches, watercolor, ceramics, candle-making, nature-inspired digital design, and more. The Artist Collective started as a way to get their art out into the world at a community-focused event—the Hilltop Street Fair.

Michaela Woodmansee, ceramics, youth outreach worker, is a driving force in a new artist collective featuring social service workers from the community that is launching its efforts during the upcoming Hilltop Street Fair.

“A vision I have is to bring people together through art to foster self expression, care, and community. Creative expression is an important part of caring for myself, connecting to myself and creating things that can represent appreciation and care for others. Having this creative outlet helps me to slow down, it creates a clearing for me to be more present in my life. Until I started having conversations, I could only speculate that I wasn’t the only one at work who used art as a form of self-expression and care. Sharing about it has sparked conversation about what brings joy to other people and what they do to care for themselves—art being a large part.

I believe that healing, fulfillment, and creativity grow in community and that this is the groundwork for some really cool things to happen. I am inspired by my coworkers every day, we work to create community and opportunity alongside people who are working hard for themselves and their lives. This inspiration sparked an idea to host an artist collective, an arena for people who work in social services to



Photo Credits: Michaela Woodmansee

come together to share their art.”

This not the only project in the works for this cooperative artist group of social services workers in



Photo Credits: Jeremiah Melson

the community. Next, Maggie and Maggie Stang, a member of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, hope to collaborate with the L’Honey project, a collaborative venture that promotes sustain-

able beekeeping and hive product development that supports the social business model. They operate four small apiary sites and produce hive

products. Their focus is on education, care for the environment, and the inclusion of vulnerable adults in business and agricultural activities.

Woodmansee says, “Making pottery with the intention of collaborating with another community group with a social aim like L’Honey really excites me. Through this collaboration, we are building on the work that L’Honey has done creating beeswax candles and combining efforts to create ceramic candle votives and holders, many of which can be used as mugs and planters after the candles have burned down.

Maggie Stang is beginning her second year with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps at the L’Honey project.

“When we learn about the ways that bees work together in the hive, we can’t help but to look at the way that our own communities are working. The bees, on top of creating our precious food supply, help us ask questions about the ways we

are nourishing and including each other in our human communities.”

Another member of the artist cooperative, Jeremiah Melson, Youth Housing Case Manager, digital design artist, spoke about the stress relieving affects of his art making. “I initially began creating art to cope with depression and insomnia. But as I developed my craft I was fascinated by the perspectives of different people interpreting my work. With that in mind, I started creating different shapes, colors, concepts and more abstract work to see if I could tell a story of how each of us lives in our own reality. Lately my art has been geared towards opening the minds of everyone who sees my art to think of life from a different point of view or to be able to imagine things they wouldn’t have before.”

When asked why he is a part of the group collaborating to have the art booth Melson says, “I’m a part of this group because it’s a unique opportunity for us to show case different sides to art. I feel it’s important for artists to think of themselves as a community. We have a gift to create, and through that creation we leave a mark on this planet. I hope that in turn builds greater community engagement. I hope that I can inspire the youth and parents alike to regain interest in the arts. I realize we’re a society driven by money, power, and science to some degree. I would like to build more platforms on things that tie us all together, and with that work towards a more unified future.”

The Artist Collective will be showcasing their works at the Hilltop Street Fair on August 25.

## GRIT CITY CO-OP COMING TO HILLTOP!

By Karen Sudderth

“Grit City Co-op, an ethical grocery store founded and operated by Tacomans. Our mission is to provide sustainable food and goods to support the well-being of our peoples and region.”

I recently sat down over coffee with Ariana Haidari, one of the founding board members of the Grit City Co-op. For the past year and a half a group of Tacomans have been meeting and working on plans to open a food co-operative. Ariana is passionate about their vision, and shared what the group wants to bring to Hilltop. “A co-operative is a community minded business that is fundamentally invested in the wellness of that community,” Ariana says. “Food can be an equalizer across a community, and a co-op is an option to improve access to food choice.”

The group is currently building membership with their first interim goal being 500 members. This threshold will provide enough capital to open a storefront. You may have seen them at Art on the Ave, and they will be at Music and Art in Wright Park on August 11th, Tacoma Green

Drinks at Broken Spoke on August 2nd, and they will also be at the Hilltop Street Fair on August 25th. Lifetime memberships are only \$100 or you can spread out the \$100 membership fee over four years, paying only \$25 a year.

Anyone will be able to shop at the co-op, but a membership allows you to be a voting member of your own business, you help choose what products are sold in the store, and you will could receive dividends each year based on the amount you spend at the co-op. Ariana said, “The great part about a co-op is people have input. Members have a voice in the store where they buy their food and locally sourced products.” Other members-only benefits are still being determined, but may include exclusive deals and sales. A Co-op can be a center for community activities as well. The Co-op would love to see classes, meetings, and other activities hosted at the storefront.

A co-op builds community and helps bring people together. Ariana also emphasized that the co-op is a place for all. Grit City Co-op aims to serve everyone in the community and also allow the membership to



Image: Founding member Audrey Weaver and Board President Chrissy Cooley

decide what products are sold. Some examples include fresh fruit and vegetables, dry stock (pasta, beans, rice,) a bulk section (where food is sold by weight,) and products from local vendors and artisans. The co-op would like to eliminate packaging as much as possible and be environmentally sustainable.

Customers can bring in their own bags, and even bring their own reusable containers/jars to refill in the bulk section.

A “Buy Club Option” is also being explored, where members could join together to purchase certain items in larger quantities and receive a wholesale discount.

Grit City Co-op is sponsoring a logo contest, and entries are due by July 14th. Rules and entry information can be found on their Facebook

page at Grit City Co-op. The winner receives a lifetime co-op membership! They are also beginning to look for possible locations, and anyone with ideas can contact the group via Facebook or email [gritcitycoop@gmail.com](mailto:gritcitycoop@gmail.com).

The co-op will hold their first annual membership meeting on September 29th at 6 p.m. The meeting location will be announced to the membership later this summer. All members are encouraged to attend, and they will be asking for nominations for the 2018 – 2019 Board of Directors.

Be sure to look for Grit City Co-op members at summer events on Hilltop, especially the Hilltop Street Fair! Ariana and the other board members look forward to answering your questions and having more people join the

co-op as voting members. Join today at [gritcitycoop.com](http://gritcitycoop.com), and be one of the founding members of this amazing community resource!

If you would like to be involved in the planning meetings, help with grants/funding, or become a member, please reach out to Grit City Co-op on Facebook. You can sign up for their newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/c8oWgn>.

## Hilltop Action Coalition Community Calendar

As of August 1, 2018

\*\*\*Know of something important happening in your community?  
Let HAC know and we'll add it to the calendar\*\*\*

----- AUGUST 2018 -----

- Aug 1 – Wednesday – Hilltop Engagement Committee Mtg 5:00pm  
(Clyde Hupp Board Room, Bates Technical College)
- Aug 2 – Thursday – Central Neighborhood Council Meeting 7:00pm-  
8:30pm (Tacoma Nature Center)
- Aug 6 – Monday – HAC Board Meeting 4:00pm-5:30pm
- Aug 7 – Tuesday – 2018 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT!
- Aug 8 – Wednesday – Neighborhood Council of New Tacoma Meet-  
ing 5:30pm-7:00pm (People's Community Ctr)
- Aug 15 – Friday – Last Day of School (Tacoma Public Schools)
- Aug 20 – Monday – HAC Monthly Community Meeting 6:00pm-  
7:30pm – Presentations TBA (Hilltop Regional Health  
Center - Conf Rm on MLK)
- Aug 21 – Tuesday – People's Community Center Steering Commit-  
tee Mtg 5:00pm-6:30pm (People's Community Ctr)
- Aug 23 – Thursday – Hilltop Library Planning Committee Mtg  
5:00pm-7:00pm (Allen Russell Conf Ctr, 1321 MLK Jr  
Way)
- Aug 25 – Saturday – Hilltop Street Fair
- Aug 28 – Tuesday – HAC Links Meeting 6:00pm (HAC Office)

Hilltop Action Coalition  
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Closed Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays

[www.hilltopactioncoalition.org](http://www.hilltopactioncoalition.org)

[hacoffice15@gmail.com](mailto:hacoffice15@gmail.com)

Keep up with the HAction, visit our Facebook page.

# LINKS TO OPPORTUNITY



## STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

The Links to Opportunity Streetscape Improvements Project is engaging the community to help redesign the sidewalk and pedestrian areas along MLK Jr Way, Division Ave, and N 1st Street. The Streetscape Improvements Project is part of a City of Tacoma effort that strives to improve social and economic opportunities in communities along the Tacoma Link Light Rail Extension Corridor.

## STAY ENGAGED WITH THE DESIGN!

**Contact us or  
stop by the office**

Andy Micklow | 253-318-5626  
1120 South 11th Street, Tacoma  
[cityoftacoma.org/links](http://cityoftacoma.org/links)

**Storefront Office**

1120 South 11th Street, Tacoma

**HOURS:**

MONDAYS	9-2
TUESDAYS	9-4
WEDNESDAYS	9-1
THURSDAYS	9-1 & 2-6
FRIDAYS	9-2



## Hilltop Street Fair Film Competition

By Drena Sellers

The Hilltop Street Fair Film Competition is kicking off its third annual film screening event during the highly anticipated 2018 Hilltop Street Fair in Tacoma, WA. The film competition is a free event from 12pm - 4pm on Saturday, August 25th. Local filmmakers range from first-time youth to experienced filmmakers. Films presented celebrate the rich diversity of our community and address social issues. An award ceremony will be presented directly after the filming screening starting at 3pm. The 2018 Hilltop Street Fair Film Competition

will be located at the Hilltop Regional Health Center, in the Community Room. Address: 1202 Martin Luther King Jr. Way Tacoma, WA 98405.

Interested in participating in our free film competition? We are still accepting video submissions no later than Friday, August 3rd 2018. Please send the video link or questions to: [HilltopFilmCompetition@gmail.com](mailto:HilltopFilmCompetition@gmail.com). Please follow our Facebook page: "hilltopfilmcompetition" for event updates and stay tuned for our program line up that will be available in mid August on our Facebook page!

## 2018 AMOCAT Awards

By Jennifer Schaal

Do you know an artist who is making an impact in your community? Give your support to that artist with a nomination for the 2018 AMOCAT Awards.

The AMOCAT (Tacoma spelled backwards) Awards for many years have highlighted the artists and arts organizations who make Tacoma such a great place to live. Your nomination can bring the attention of the Tacoma Arts Commission to an artist or organization in the Hilltop, and give that artist a boost to their ego and maybe a boost to their career pursuing their

dreams. Former Hilltoppers who have received AMOCATs include: Oliver Doriss, Christopher Paul Jordan, Hilltop Artists, D.A.S.H., and Fab-5.

To make your nomination, see the City of Tacoma website

# BIKE LIKE THE MOUNTAIN IS OUT

Find bike rides and events at [BIKE253.COM](http://BIKE253.COM)



**BikeMonth**  
TACOMA-PIERCE COUNTY

Log your trips at [PierceTrips.com](http://PierceTrips.com)





Photo Credits: Jacob Rose

## The Building of a Neighborhood

### A Lesson in Collaboration, Cooperation and Persistence

By Judy Quackenbush

The following article appeared in an earlier Hilltop Action Coalition publication called HAC Headlines. It is authored by Judy Quackenbush who was instrumental in the development of the Park, is dated October 18, 2001. If you have access to other issues of HAC Headlines, the HAC Office would like to make copies; please call the HAC Office at 253-442-4484.

"Neighbor's Park is the happy outcome of a community response to a neighborhood in crisis. In 1993, the intersection of 8th and I Streets and the surrounding neighborhood, was largely not a safe, healthy, or cared for place. And at the same time, it was rich with many good people who stayed inside, as well as beautiful old homes. The streets were claimed by drug and related activity. Beginning with a large neighborhood meeting (sponsored by HAC) at the Open Bible Church, following a murder on our streets, the shift in perception from a neighborhood without hope, to a place filled with possibilities, began.

The birth of Neighbors' Park began with a giant cleanup of the overgrown northwest corner of 8th

& I, for the purpose of replacing the activity there with neighborhood volleyball. Next step was the leasing of the lot for \$1.00 a year, if we could provide liability insurance. So, carloads of neighbors attended the Metro Parks Board meeting, and asked for their support. We became insured through their umbrella policy. A Health Department grant was next, (our project met their criteria of increasing community health in an unsafe area) with the lot rototilled for community gardens and fenced, all with neighborhood labor.

The concept of positive activity and community "ownership" was there from the first. Our vision started to include a playground for children, and our first Neighborhood Council Innovative Grant made that possible. Neighbors met regularly from the start, and worked with Metro Parks and the city in planning the play area, and volunteer labor constructed it. After first year or two, the gardens had a water line. 1995 brought national recognition from Neighborhood's USA (NUSA) at their conference in Arkansas for: Physical Revitalization/Beautification Single Neighborhoods. Later, we applied for an Urban Resources Partnership grant, which we were aware of through a HAC meet-

ing. This allowed for more garden improvements and needed materials and equipment. During this time we also raise money (Street "fair" and donations) to have the City construct the traffic circle in the intersection, for both safety and beautification. All the while, our "vision" was growing. We wanted the park, by now named "Neighbors' Park" (children contributed names that were voted on) and including gardens and play area, to be safely permanent. That meant ownership, not leasing. The Capital Improvement funds from the City of Tacoma, and implemented through Neighborhood Council made possible the purchase of the corner lot. And the vision was growing...To the north was a large abandoned property, and to the south, 8th street and another abandoned "burned out" property.

One day, someone from Metro Parks stood in the middle of 8th St., scratched his head and said..."It would be great if this street could be vacated, that building torn down, with the park including it all..." Shortly, that became part of the vision. With persistence, commitment, and support from the Community, the City, and Metro Parks, those buildings came down, and the street was vacated. New Tacoma Neighborhood Council funds allowed us to purchase the lots. And then began a long period of planning, with the final result of a master plan for the park. The New Tacoma Neighborhood Council provided support again, this time for the park improvements and construction. The City of Tacoma Public Works Department, Metro Parks and the City of Tacoma Traffic/Engi-

neering Division cooperated on designing the park improvements and administering the construction contract. Washington Insurance Council grants (written collaboratively with HAC and Bryant Neighbors) have included funds for park furniture and improvements, as well as support for the Litter Posse youth stipends. The north and south borders of Neighbors' Park are fenced through a CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) grant.

A wonderful example of community involvement and "serendipity" is the collaboration that brought art to Neighbors' Park. Urban Studies students at Evergreen State College - Tacoma Campus, selected Neighbors' Park as part of their assignment to implement a project that would bring visible improvements to a neighborhood. There began a cooperative effort that included Evergreen, Bates Technical College, the New Tacoma Neighborhood Council, the City, Metro Parks, and 8th & I Neighbors. The idea of neighbor children painting their pictures on glass tiles for the park became reality. Students from Bates Facilities Maintenance program made the concrete forms and poured the pads for new picnic tables, and the donated glass tiles fired by Hilltop Artists in Residence were placed in the cement by the children, neighbors, and Bates students.

Using Evergreen students and 8th & I Neighbors' ideas for an arbor and climbing vines and roses, Bates Mechanical Engineering students designed and generated production drawings for the ten foot tall ironwork

arbor panels. Students in Bates welding program fabricated and welded the angle iron to complete the framework. The arbors grace the east and west entrances of Neighbors' Park. The City, Bates, Evergreen students and neighbors worked cooperatively on the installation. As we move from the birth of Neighbors' Park through the completed construction, we look ahead to long-term maintenance and the master agreement between the City and Metro Parks. Neighbors will continue to care for the gardens, and be actively involved in the care and life of Neighbors' Park.

Saturday, October 20 (2001) [eight years later] ... neighbors and friends of the park (thank you Tacoma CARES!) planted about 15 ornamental cherry and pear trees, about 50 evergreen trees along the fence borders, shrubs, ground cover, and climbing vines and rose bushes for the arbors. And then they celebrated!... We were all struck by how beautiful Neighbors' Park is, how healthy the neighborhood has become, and how grateful we are for the support of so many that brought us to this place."

Postscript: 8th & I Neighbors continues to meet regularly and to maintain and enhance Neighbors' Park. In 2013 we observed our twentieth anniversary with a celebration at Sure House Open Bible Church where our first meeting was held...and the celebrations continue!

## AME Church

By Harlan Shoop

Allen AME church on MLK was established in -1889. The present building, where current ministry happens was dedicated in 1988. The church has a rich history in Tacoma.

Currently, Rev. Anthony Steele is the pastor. He delights in preaching, teaching Bible studies and leading the people of his congregation. Rev. Steele is married to Theresa and they have two children-AJ and Brittany. He has been the pastor of Allen for 3 and half years having previously served in Northern Nevada before coming to Tacoma.

Pastor Steele says-"It's about family. Everyone is welcome. Guided by biblical principles, the church is a place that believes we are all equal at the foot of the Cross of Jesus." Supporting marriages and families is at the heart of the belief that our whole community is stronger when our families are encouraged. Sin-

gle folks are always included and encouraged as well to dive deep into what in means to be in rela-



tionships that are honoring to God. Pastor Steele is also the president of the Hilltop Business Association

and is concerned about having more businesses on the Hilltop in the future. Especially with regard to the new light rail coming down MLK. This will be a major change for the community. One of the church's vi-

sions is for Senior Housing and for more vibrant retail on the Hilltop. He feels like we need more "anchor" stores like McDonalds,

Starbucks and other retail to make Hilltop a more thriving community.

About 320 people attend two services on a Sunday morning. Allen AME is filled with music with at least 5 choirs including a children's choir. The Sons of Thunder is one of the choirs lead by president, Jesse Boozer. They often sing in other churches and community events. Mr. Boozer says the music is partly what drew him the church after retiring from the Navy and joining in 1973. He says it's like family there because everyone is a brother and sister.

Several ministries are important to the church and the community. On Sunday the kitchen is open to anyone who might need a meal. Down the street from the church is the Club House where young people can stop by after school and be involved in creative activities such as making art, working on computer skills, connecting with other students. Allen AME started the Club House 18 years ago. It is part of an international organization which all do similar activities with young people. Sometime this summer the Club House

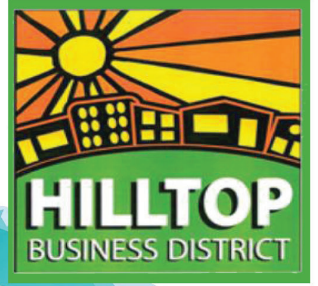
plans to group Skype other Club Houses as far away as New Zealand.

Another ministry down the street is Allen Russell Conference Center that is a space available for start up businesses to be able to launch their vision. In the center is a commercial kitchen which Pastor Steele says is the largest in the city. South Sound Outreach is presently using the space along with some other startups who hope to get their catering businesses going because there is a place to launch it.

Radical Hospitality is a very recent idea to show a movie outside in the parking lot starting about 9 pm. The first movie on June 15th was "Black Panther". Free hot dogs, popcorn and soft drinks will be provided. The whole community is invited. Bring a chair and or a blanket and enjoy a good movie. Another movie is planned in July and August. Contact the church at 253-627-6855 for information about upcoming movies.

2018

TACOMA'S



# HILLTOP STREET FAIR

**Saturday August 25 from 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM**

Featuring local music on the  
Community Health Plan of Washington Stage  
On the Corner of MLK Jr. Way and Earnest S. Brazill St.

Thrett Brown: 11:00 AM-11:30 AM



Mr. Blackwatch: 11:45 AM-12:30 PM

Flor De Luna: 12:50 PM-1:45 PM



Hilltop Street Fair Fashion Show: 2:00 PM-3:30 PM



Sister Madame: 3:50 PM-4:40 PM

Libraries Rock! Celebrating Community and Diversity in the 253: 5:00 PM-6:00 PM



## Hilltop Street Fair Fashion Show - In Memory of Mr. Mac -

Saturday August 25

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Community Health Plan of Washington Stage  
On the Corner of MLK Jr. Way and Earnest S. Brazill St.

Featuring Clothing & Designs by:

- Mr. Mac • Poppy Seed Clothing • Dorene Ruffin
- Reused and Recycle • Channing Baby and Co.

Hair and Make-up by:  
Summit Salon Academy

Models from:  
Top Model Boot Camp &  
Sound Movement Arts Center (SMAC)

