



Island Passages

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF WHIDBEY ISLAND

P.O. Box 1076, Freeland, WA 98249 • 360-321-8656 • www.whidbey.com/uucwi/

February 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 4:00p -5:15p Service: Sequel to the Relativist Gospel	7	8	9	10	11 9:30a Social Action Committee meeting at Trinity	12 9:00a -11:00a North End Koffee Klatch (p. 3) 2:00p -4:00p Welcoming Congregation workshop (p. 3)
13 2:00p Choir practice 4:00p -5:15p Service: The Journeys of Works and Harmony	14 9:00a Rally for Equal Rights and Marriage Equality (p. 3) 7:00p -9:00p Board of Trustees meeting at Trinity	15 7:30p Book Group (p. 3)	16	17	18 PNWD Annual General Meeting begins	19 9:00a CamCam Committee meeting (p. 4)
20 4:00p -5:15p Service: Mary Magdalene: Role and Significance	21 newsletter deadline 9:30a Worship Committee meeting at Trinity	22	23	24	25	26 Services Auction (p. 4)
27 2:00p Choir practice 4:00p -5:15p Service: Binding Back to the Source —Religion & Spirituality	28	<p>Additions and updates can be found on the calendar on the congregation's web site: www.whidbey.com/uucwi/</p>				

**February 6th — Sequel to the Relativist Gospel
with guest speaker Walter Andrews**

Last year Walter Andrews talked to us about the fundamental principles of relativism and the need for relativist perspectives in a world troubled by the consequences of conflicting strains of absolutist thought. He promised to come back, if we asked him, to talk about what proud evangelical relativists might do to spread the good news of relativism. Well, we asked, and he is coming with some ideas about what we can do and a report on some of the things he is doing for the relativist cause.

Lay Leader: Malcolm F.

Membership Representative: Malcolm F.

February 13th — The Journeys of Works and Harmony

with the Reverend Kit Ketcham

Reverend Kit Ketcham will continue the series of sermons linking personality typology with spiritual preferences. The Journey of Works appeals to those with a Myers-Briggs mind and heart type of ST (sensing/thinking); the Journey of Harmony appeals to those with a type of NF (intuitive/feeling).

*Service offering recipient: Operation Sack Lunch
(see at right)*

Lay Leader: Toyon C.

Membership Representative: Roy B.

February 20th — Mary Magdalene: Role and Significance

**with guest minister
the Reverend Rachel Taber-Hamilton**

Rachel Taber-Hamilton will speak on the topic “Mary Magdalene; her role and significance in Christian history and in contemporary dialogue.” This presentation considers modern academic research in Gnostic texts and cultural histories. Reverend Taber-Hamilton is an ordained Episcopal priest with a background in anthropology and folklore studies. She led our congregation in the blessing of our land last August and is looking forward to being with us again.

Lay Leader: Carol B.

Membership Representative: Tim K.

**February 27th — Binding Back to the Source —
Religion & Spirituality
with guest speaker Sarah Richards**

What is the relationship between religion and spirituality? Why do we get these confused and how can we start to discern the unique qualities and roles of each to be more at peace with both? Sarah will explore these issues in her sermon.

Lay Leader: Mavis C.

Membership Representative: Baird B.

Special Offering for Operation Sack Lunch

This month’s special offering on the 13th will go to Operation Sack Lunch (www.opsacklunch.org) to support their programs providing food to homeless individuals and families in Seattle.

Children’s Religious Education Corner

Our January 8th meeting was the second such get-together we have had in as many months. It was a heartening turn-out of parents and church folk (and wonderful food!) willing to talk and listen about short- and long-range CRE issues at UUCWI.

Our short-term goal was to flesh out a CRE calendar for the balance of the church year. We acknowledged Mavis’ terrific contribution of acting as head teacher for the primary-aged children, but it is not her job. (She already has a job — a really big one!) The main barrier to giving her some relief and finding the occasional substitute for me is our classroom volunteer shortage. I have reassessed our curricula and we have lots of great and easy lesson ideas that I will prepare for potential volunteers. This does not preclude volunteers’ sharing their own special skills or interests in the CRE classrooms. Francie W. is heading up our volunteer recruitment effort on her return from her travels.

In the meantime, I will begin a multiage program every first Sunday of the month called “Singing Sundays”, and Heidi H. has offered to collaborate on a multiage puppet project for Earth Day. This will cover several Sundays; stay posted for dates. The W.s are volunteering to do a primary lesson each month. Sincere thanks to these volunteers.

On a recent Sunday, Juli S. and I

were the only participants in the youth program. I had scheduled a Chinese New Year lesson on the Kitchen God. Juli, being Chinese, had so much to teach me — the shape of a character, the amount of incense in the burner (okay, so we set off the smoke alarm!) — I was reminded that the big gift of my teaching is LEARNING and all the contingent opportunities for new awarenesses and relationships along the way. I invite you to consider being a part of our program in a way that you are able. See you soon!

~ Siri S.

Congregational News & Events

North End Koffee Klatch, February 12th

North End Koffee Klatch (NEKK) will meet from 9-11 a.m. at the West Wind cafeteria of Whidbey General Hospital in Coupeville. Join this lively group for conversation and coffee.

Welcoming Congregation Workshop #2, February 12th

Our first Welcoming Congregation workshop in January was a rousing success with 12 attendees. This first session consisted of familiarizing ourselves with the schedule of workshops, the assumptions the curriculum is based on, norms for participation, definitions, and discussion in pairs of times we felt excluded, when we learned about love and sex, and how we have seen homophobia exhibited. We also thought about our fears and our hopes for the work of becoming welcoming and submitted questions we hope will be answered by the workshops.

Our second workshop will be February 12th at Trinity from 2-4 p.m., and our topic for the day will be "What we know and how we learned it", looking at the stereotypes and associations and misconceptions we may have about sexual orientation and gender identification.

All are invited to every workshop, whether or not you have attended any previously. This is a great way to get better acquainted with other UUCWlars and learn more about a subject that has often been too taboo to talk about in public. Reverend Kit Ketcham has taught the Welcoming Congregation curriculum twice in other congregations and is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the work.

Marriage Equality/Civil Rights Rally in Olympia, February 14th

Get on board for love and justice! Join others from across the state in an interfaith rally in Olympia on February 14th to advocate for civil rights for sexual minorities and marriage equality for all couples. Patricia B. is organizing a carpool to go to Olympia for the day, which will begin at 9 a.m. with coffee and donuts and workshops about how to lobby effectively for our cause. At noon, we'll hear the Seattle Men's and Women's Choirs sing for us and listen to speakers about the importance of these justice issues. From about 1 p.m. to 3 or so, we'll meet with legislators from district 34 to ask them to pass civil rights legislation to protect sexual minorities from discrimination.

This will be an exciting day! For more information, see Reverend Kit Ketcham's column on page 5 or call her at 206-781-3098.

Book Group, February 15th

The Best Democracy Money Can Buy by investigative journalist Greg Palast will be the UUCWI Book Group's Tuesday, February 15, discussion topic. The gathering will be held at the B.s at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome.

Palast is a highly regarded American-born journalist whose columns appear regularly in the *Guardian* and *Observer* in Britain. He has meticulously researched and documented the unpleasant truth about globalization, corporate cons and high finance fraud, as well as the shocking story of the 2000 election and how it was engineered in Florida. He is nonpartisan in his charges and exposes both the Republican and Democratic shabbiness. His website, www.gregpalast.com/, has a lot more detail about his work. He is not a Michael Moore-type, but his revelations are even more shocking because they are so well documented. A good read for all who hunger for the truth about our government minus the spin coming out of the White House. Please call Peggy or Baird for directions.

"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." (John 8:32)

~ Peggy B.

Service Auction, February 26th

Put Saturday night February 26th on your calendar so you won't miss the most FUNdraising event of the year! You'll be able to have great food and an entertaining evening with all your UU friends buying and selling wonderful goods and services donated to auction. This is an event that keeps on giving all year long when you get to receive the wonderful things sold during the fun-filled evening.

If you haven't yet filled out your auction donation form, don't worry. They are available at the church and on the website. Remember, the auction is only as good as the items you create! You make all this happen through your generosity and creativity — THANK YOU!

Call Sarah if you need donation forms, tickets for dinner, or other information.

Benefit Concert, March 12th

The Rainey Lewis Band will perform on Saturday March 12th at the Clinton Union Building (also called the Dodge Building) starting at 7:30 p.m. Rainey Lewis graciously offered the services of her band for the first auction for the Whidbey Environmental Action Network (WEAN), and Linda G. was the winning bidder. Linda is offering the concert to benefit our congregation's building fund.



You can hear some of Rainey's music online at www.raineyonline.com/. Rich Rorex will also perform. Tickets priced at \$10 will be available from Linda G. or Mavis C.

Adopt-A-Road Safety Video

We now have CDs of the safety training video that is required viewing for all Adopt-A-Road Highway volunteers. If you'd like to help during any of the coming season's road clean-up days but haven't yet seen the video, you'll need to borrow a CD beforehand. February is a good month to cozy up in front of your computer monitor and watch the 12-minute movie. Watch it with a friend, partner, spouse, or new UUCWI member and make the viewing a social event!

Contact me if you'd like to borrow the CD.

~ Nancy S.

Keeping Our Eyes on the Prize

The CapCam Committee met on January 21 and reviewed and evaluated the campaign thus far. The Building Fund drive has achieved more than 70% of its goal in pledges toward our Phase One Building. We wish to gratefully acknowledge the many members and friends who have demonstrated their faith in our future by their pledges. The treasurer is ready to receive your pledges at any time, in full or in installments. We thank those who have already paid their pledges as this money helps with start-up expenses. A separate bank account has been opened for the Building Fund money.

Working with the Building Committee, the CapCam Committee will send out a questionnaire to give members and friends a chance to put in writing their commitment to donate "sweat equity" to the building project. The applications for loans and grants from UU sources are being prepared to be ready when all the assessments of our readiness and financial resources are completed. The board has provided a document to guide the CapCam and Building Committees in its preparations. A local bank will be contacted regarding their loan programs.

It appears at this point that although we did not achieve our goal of \$215,000 in pledges, the project is doable if money-saving building techniques are used with a large component of donated labor. It is important to remember that this is a "faith-based" effort. "Build it and they will come" has proved true for the Olympic, Quimper, and Woodinville Congregations as they built and were soon bursting at the seams with new members. This miracle is hard to hang onto at times in our rented quarters and present comfort zone at Trinity. But UUCWI has a mission to fulfill on Whidbey Island, and there has never been a time when it is more needed than now.

The next meeting of the CapCam Committee will be Saturday, February 19, at 9:00 a.m. at Bardarsons. All are welcome.

~ Peggy B., CapCam Committee Chair

From Our Minister

Dear Whidbey friends,

For me, February is the start of springtime! I remember, when I was living in Colorado, expecting things to start blooming in February — because they had bloomed here in the Pacific Northwest in February! I'd stalk my neighborhood for pussy willows and forsythia, checking the frozen ground to see if daffodils and tulips had started to emerge yet, hoping for crocus sightings.



Of course, I was usually disappointed, though occasionally a chinook wind would blow through, warming things up enough to produce a sprout or two to assuage my hunger for green. It's been wonderful to be home again, where things do bloom in February, and I'm looking forward to the local azaleas and rhodies that are just waiting for the right moment.

February, too, is a time for romance, and this February we have a chance to advocate for justice and romance. Patricia Brooks has volunteered to organize the carpool which will go to Olympia on February 14 to rally for marriage equality and civil rights.

This will be an exciting and productive experience, I believe, and is an opportunity for us to take a stand on an important local and national issue. It is particularly productive in that we will be learning how to be lobbyists for issues that matter to us as citizens.

In the morning, from about 9-11, we will learn from experienced lobbyists and legislators just how to approach our elected officials with our requests; at noon, we will attend the rally on the statehouse steps; and then those attending will meet with legislators about the issues of civil rights for sexual minorities and marriage equality for all couples.

I have made appointments with the legislators who represent Whidbey Island (Senator Haugen and Representatives Strow and Bailey) during the afternoon, and you will have an opportunity to talk as representatives of UUCWI about our concerns.

The rally will be very exciting, with music by both the Seattle Men's and Women's choruses, words from a variety of clergy about the justice issues of civil rights and marriage equality, and an interfaith atmosphere. Clergy will be robed, and we are urging all who attend to wear RED, in honor of Valentine's Day and the urgency of these issues.

I hope you'll call Patricia right away and reserve a spot in the carpool. I will go down separately and will meet with you and the Vashon folks when we get there. I'm looking forward to introducing you to each other soon!

Much love,
Kit

Social Action Committee News

The Social Action Committee is pursuing several projects. In addition to our ongoing Baskets for Books scholarship fund sales, we've been promoting the Green Sanctuary program within the congregation, contributing service offerings to local charities once a month, gearing up for the Marriage Equality Day rally, and arranging service speakers on charity and environmental justice topics. We recently applied for and received a grant from the Langley Middle School Youth in Philanthropy program to purchase litter-grabber tools for use by other Adopt-A-Road groups on South Whidbey. These tools will permit greater participation by volunteers who have difficulty bending down to pick up litter.

Notes from our meetings are available on our website on the Committees page. UUCWI members and friends are welcome to join the committee or just help with any of our various projects. Please let me know if you're interested in joining us.

~ Nancy S., Chair

Choir Corner

Let's brighten up the dark midwinter with song!

Choir members are reminded that rehearsals will be held February 13th and 27th, 2:00 p.m. at Trinity Chapel, with the performance at 4:00 p.m. on February 27th.

I'd like to thank all the choir members for their dedication and cooperative efforts to build our choir into a wonderful expression of community and hope. Special

thanks to music chair, Frank A. for setting up the piano and seats PERFECTLY last Sunday; Bob L. for other set-up details; our singers with disabilities and the choir members who help with their transportation; Vern O. and Gretchen D. for bolstering our ranks with their expertise; and the congregation — we deeply appreciate your listening ears.

Choir always welcomes new members. Only requirements: ability to match pitches and willingness to learn. Come February 13th or call me if you are interested in joining.

~ Heidi H.

Agreeing to Disagree

By David P. C., UUCWI
President

Lately I've been musing about *community*. Not the warm fuzzy *we're-all-in-this-together* or *love-one-another* kind of musing, but the *who-needs-this* kind. The kind that comes after the Christmas family get-togethers where you find out who your cousin voted for. Who wants to be "in community" with such people? Wouldn't it be better to be selective? To be "*in clique*" instead?

Dictionary definition #6 for "community" is "similar character, agreement, identity." That fits us in UUCWI. But what about definition #1: "a social group whose members reside in a specific locality"? That greater community, be it Whidbey Island, or the "world community" we UUs strive for, has diverse members who don't necessarily agree with our principles and beliefs.

The nature of the differences among us is, of course, what matters. Many differences in beliefs (for example, what prayer is) are semantic – not necessarily real differences. Many others (for example, whether there is an afterlife) are open choices, with no evidence, or at least disputed facts, to suggest a correct alternative. These cases are not troublesome. We can accept these differences, agreeing to disagree. The worth and dignity of the other person can be readily respected.

At the other end of the spectrum, it must be recognized that there are those who refuse to agree to disagree, or worse, can't live and let live,

as is the case with the jihadists. Then your respect for justice and for the inherent worth and dignity of every person, including yourself, requires damage control measures. But, hopefully, this pathological extreme is unusual.

Even in civilized society, however, some differences go well beyond what we ourselves could believe. Have you ever been conversing with an interesting, personable new acquaintance and then discovered they harbored some really weird and strange belief, such as having been abducted by aliens capable of teleportation? [No doubt you have some favorite examples of your own. No? Try politics.] Regardless of how tolerant you are, I suspect you'd add labels to your mental file on that person. "Uncritical thinker" would be kind.

There are several civilized options for dealing with the challenge of being in community with such a person. 1. Avoid the subject, or each other. Clearly this is a cop-out, although often convenient. 2. Pretend interest or agreement. Probably, this violates your own truth or integrity standards. 3. Reason with the person, attempting to persuade them of the rectitude of your views. This has a low probability of success and high probability of a negative reaction. It might violate the golden rule. I think it's worth exploration but as a primary tactic is more likely to solidify the opposition than resolve the issue by achieving a conversion. 4. Agree to disagree. This strikes me as the most honest option, and if genuinely reciprocated, allows you both to be in community.

Yet there remains another problem. If I feel strongly about my own belief being right, isn't that inconsistent with agreeing to tolerate someone else who believes differently? For example, if I'm against the war in Iraq, agreeing to disagree with someone who believes we should have invaded seems to undermine the strength of my convictions. Which is more important, the principle I'm defending or my relationship with this casual acquaintance?

The answer to this, I think, lies in clarifying our objective: namely, to make changes, not merely to stand for something. We'd like to have our position considered seriously by the other person. This cannot be accomplished effectively if we haven't accepted one another – aren't in



community with each other. Thus it is good strategy to make a friend of the person we disagree with; we may gain an opportunity to encourage his or her spiritual growth. We also might learn something useful ourselves, at least where he or she is coming from. Complex issues usually have more than one legitimate viewpoint.

The manner in which the UU principles complement one another and guide us when considering the issue of disagreements is enlightening. The *inherent worth and dignity of every person* is the bedrock value defining a relationship of equals. *Justice, equity and compassion in human relations* establish reciprocity and fairness. *Acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth* in our congregations puts us in right relationship even with those we disagree with. *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning* unbinds us from the rigidity of inherited answers so that we may engage with others and find wisdom in their traditions and experiences. *The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large* allows for competition in the marketplace of ideas and for orderly decision-making, win or lose. *The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all* commits us to extend our community to everyone. *Respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we are all a part* reminds us that we aren't alone and can't isolate ends from means.

Let us not limit our "community" to UUCWI only – although we're special! If we don't see eye to eye with our neighbors, let's agree to disagree.

Member News & Notes

House Hunting Continues

Member Joan G. recently sold her home on Dugualla Bay (north of Oak Harbor) and is still searching for a new one in the Coupeville area or further south on Whidbey Island.

As you know, many wonderful properties on Whidbey sell informally — without the involvement of real estate agents, or if 'listed' on the Multiple Listing Service, sell almost the minute they are listed because selected folks have been told in advance of their availability.

Consequently, Joan feels that it would be extremely valuable to have extra eyes and ears out there helping her identify properties for sale. She would love all of you to consider being those eyes and ears! Her criteria are pretty tight, but surely there must be something out there that fits that you either already know about or might hear about soon!

This is what she is looking for: A small home (1200-1400 sq ft), perhaps with a cottage-style (maybe even cabin-style) to it, on a piece of land and in an area that has mature trees but with a view of the water (or on the water), surrounded by other homes and individuals that clearly enjoy trees as well as views, or at least reflecting their love of the outdoors in some way. The home needs to be in good condition, with original good construction and with no major improvements needed. Wood floors and lots of windows are highly desirable features, both of which she feels, help bring the outdoors indoors. At least a one car garage is also a necessity.

Joan is also willing to consider building such a small home. A desirable piece of land would accommodate the requirements above.

Joan can be reached by phone.

Whidbey Interfaith In Action

A new interfaith group is forming on Whidbey Island and invites all those interested to attend their monthly meetings in Freeland. The group's goals are to share information about our various faiths (without proselytizing) and to perform service in the community. Their first service project has been to send a few members to assist in preparing donated materials for shipment to tsunami-affected areas of Asia and Africa, and they are planning to help with the annual Hearts & Hammers event in May. They are also working to gather reading material to donate to the county jail, especially books and magazines that will complement the parenting classes taught there.

Buddhists, Wiccans, Mormons, and UUs have attended the Friday evening meetings, and Jews, Catholics, and others have indicated interest. If you'd like to find out more, please contact Nancy S. or see

groups.yahoo.com/group/WIIA/.

From the PNW District

Poetry Award

The Edmonds Religious Service Committee is preparing for Poetry Sunday the first week of April. As a part of that service, they sponsor an award for a poem based on one of the denomination's principles. This year the award for the chosen poem is \$200. UUs, friends and relatives are welcome to submit a poem.

Rules:

- poems must be not over one page in length
- may deal positively or critically with the theme
- poet's name and contact information must be on the back of the poem
- poet must be willing to have the poem included in a chapbook of selected poems
- poems are due by March 3, 2005

Submit poems to

Poetry Sunday
Edmonds UUC
8109 224th St. SW
Edmonds, WA 98026-8247

From the UUA

UUSC Action Center

Take action from your position as armchair coach for the world. Let's admit it, our lives can get very busy with all the things and responsibilities we have so that we might not have the time to write a letter to our representative or senator. The UUSC has help for you!

The UUSC Legislative Action Center has some worldwide concerns that the UUSC is working on, and you can help them (and your conscience) by using that site to send email of your views on those issues. The URL is capwiz.com/uusc/home/. Granted, the venerable people who actually write pen and paper letters have more influence, but hey, an email is better than no mail.

~ Sarah R.

[Editor's note: A link to the UUSC webpage is on the Related Links page of UUCWI's website.]

Building UU Resource Networks

To help bring in the new year, it is my pleasure to announce a new service that is being offered: Building UU Resource Networks (BUURN) is a new organization that is offering free web resources to all Unitarian Universalist groups and events. Yes, it's free. We offer

- Complete web sites
- Forums
- Photo galleries
- Streaming audio & video
- Mailing lists
- Email accounts & email forwarding
- Online registration pages
- Blogs
- E-zines
- Collaborative sites
- Technical training/teaching

We also offer other, more specific technologies. Please don't hesitate to visit our website or drop us an email if you would like more information, or if you have any requests, comments or suggestions.

These resources are not limited to congregations. Youth groups, covenant groups, campus ministries, church retreats...any and all UU groups and events can have the web resources they need.

In faith,
Dev Nambi, founder
(206) 683-6486
webmaster@buurn.org
www.buurn.org

Especially for Newcomers

The website of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has a special section for newcomers to the UUA and to Unitarian Universalism. The website includes Frequently Asked Questions, a newcomers bulletin board, and links to the more than 200 UU email lists.



Five Ways to Live Unitarian Universalist Values in the New Year

1. Learn More about the 2004-2006 Study Action Issue on global warming.
The UUA Commission on Social Witness has provided a wealth of information, in collaboration with the UUA's Washington Center for Legislative Advocacy. Read more about this important world issue and take action in your congregation and your community! (see www.uua.org/uuawo/new/article.php?list=type&type=90%20)
2. Become involved in a covenant group/small group ministry in your congregation.
Covenant groups are a transformational practice through which we, with others, can discover our own underlying assumptions about reality and examine our ways of being, some of which have become so habitual that they seem to us just 'the way things are.' Visit the Small Group Ministry website (www.smallgroupministry.net/) and the UUA's small group ministry page (www.uua.org/cde/sgm/index.html) to find out more!
3. Become a more active lay leader in your congregation.
Our congregations need all of us to strengthen the voice of Unitarian Universalism in our community and the wider world. The InterConnections lay leadership site (www.uua.org/programs/layleader/) offers you QuickStart information, Frequently Asked Questions, a link to the InterConnections newsletter, and more!
4. Talk to other Unitarian Universalists and share information and learning.
The UUA hosts over 250 email lists and several bulletin boards which can help you connect to other UUs around the globe and share learning, ideas, and fellowship. Visit our communication forum page (www.uua.org/programs/communication.html) and follow the links to subscribe to uua-l, our news and information email list, or any of the others that will feed your mind and your deeper connection to our faith!
5. Nurture your spirit - read a Skinner House book!
Mary Wellemeyer's *Admire the Moon* (www.uua.org/skinner/5208.html) has just been published, and offers a loving look at life, the spirit, and the worshipping center of our souls - perfect for reflection in this new year!

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of Whidbey Island**

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If you wish to contact any of the Board
members, call
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Minister: Kit Ketcham (206-781-3098)
Chaplain: Sally Elder (360-675-3314)

Our minister and chaplain are available for rites
of passage ceremonies (including ceremonies of
commitment or union) and pastoral visits.

Newsletter Information:

News, announcements, events, and other items of
general interest to members of the congregation
should be submitted in writing by the 20th of each
month to editor Nancy Snow, uucwi@whidbey.com
or at 4350 Witter Road, Langley 98260. Short faxed
items may be acceptable; call 221-8664 for more
information. Items submitted after press time will
appear in the following month's newsletter if
appropriate. Time-sensitive late items will be
posted with the announcements and/or on the
calendar on our web site.

Current and past issues of this newsletter are
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