



Monica Wooton and 5th grade student, Vickie Hughes, work in computer lab at Lawton.

## MHS HAPPENINGS

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## Lawton School and MHS Working Together

by Monica Wooton

Lawton Elementary School has partnered with MHS to have fifth and some fourth graders write their memoirs and study local history. Teacher Peter Hubbard and MHS President Monica Wooton have worked together on a series of classroom exercises and computer lab time to allow students to learn memoir-writing skills and publish their life stories.

"I love this collaboration with The Magnolia Historical Society...they have been generous with time, expertise and donated books. I believe the future of education lies in school/community partnerships and that is what we are doing with this project", says Hubbard.

The Society offered every student's family a complimentary book *Magnolia: Making More Memories* at Lawton's Curriculum night September 27<sup>th</sup> as part of the program. The students have worked with Wooton and Hubbard to author 5 paragraph stories highlighting 3 special moments of their lives.



They were introduced to memoir writing with examples from the history book. Memoir topics like: "Blackberry Picking on Magnolia in the 1920s" by Dale Forbus Hogle, "My Kindergarten" by Clint White and "Grandma Epley's Attic" by Barbara Wade Gates all old time Magnolians were read and discussed with the students.

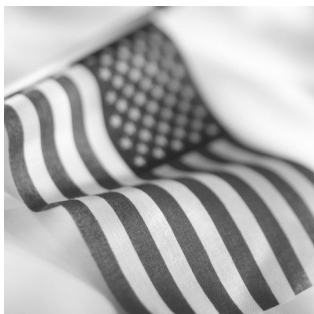
Neil Garrens, Ph.D and Principal adds his perspective on the project: "One of the things that makes a great school is involved community members - sharing their expertise and investing in our youth. It's great to read small personal moments from student's lives that have come out of this project - stories of travel, of animal encounters, of small playground victories, and of loss. Helping students be powerful and expressive writers is an empowering gift to our society".

Concepts of writing were introduced and students practiced writing their "crummy first drafts" and then re-writing and revising with the help of their parents, classroom volunteers and Hubbard and Wooton. Each student then made a poster with their published stories and each child had to illustrate their work.

One student said of her participation, "We get to publish stories at our school of when we had a special moment or of when we were little. I am learning I should have less telling and more showing...more good details in my stories."

"I liked the fact I got to share my childhood memories with people. So, they could see what kind of person I am. I learned you can express yourself really well and have fun doing it", another classmate added.

Guest speakers, field trips and events featuring local history will be spread throughout the year as Hubbard's students explore the art of writing and their lives, the real world around them and eventually their places in future careers and as citizens of the world.



**The Magnolia Historical Society  
Lawton School  
and the Magnolia/Queen Anne District Council  
will partner for a lively  
upcoming elections information night  
at Lawton Elementary School  
4000—27th Avenue West  
Thursday, November 1<sup>st</sup> 6:30-8:00pm**

Students will create PowerPoint presentations on election information and issues relating to the November 6th national and local elections.

There will be a student Question and Answer with a panel of candidates and elected officials from both major parties.

This will be a non-partisan event.

**Public Invited!**

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**The Magnolia Historical Society  
is offering  
a free memoir writing workshop  
*Magnolia Branch Public Library*  
Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup> 1:00-4:00pm**



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brings back memories to prompt your writing.

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**History is Moving!  
Museum of History & Industry  
Grand Opening at Lake Union Park**

On December 29, 2012, MOHAI will open the doors to a new regional history museum at the Naval Reserve Building (Armory) in Lake Union Park. This location will allow MOHAI to serve far greater audiences, become a central place in the region’s civic landscape, and engage visitors and students in the power of history.



**Website at [www.mohai.org](http://www.mohai.org) to learn about free tickets and the Grand Opening Events**

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## Snapshot in Time: Magnolia

### The Glory Days of Street Racing on the Boulevard

by Monica Wooton

#### Then...

In "A Long and Winding Road" from *Magnolia: Making More Memories*, Magnolia resident Claudia Isquith describes the 4 decades long battle between an early prominent land owner James Clise, the city of Seattle, Magnolia residents against the city and then amongst themselves to get Magnolia Boulevard paved. "The City Council compromised and agreed to a 70-foot graded section; the work was completed on July 30, 1948, with the City contributing \$40,422 from the City Street Fund for an 8-inch-thick section of concrete pavement extending from West Emerson Street to West Dravus Street. Other City departments covered the balance of the cost, and the 44 residents were not assessed for the improvement. One of the compromises was no lights on the street", Isquith reports.



Straight stretch paved and landscaping being added  
*Seattle City Archive c1953*

Once that road was finally done in the late 1940's "street racing" became a pastime of many male Magnolia teens. It had a resurgence in the 60's and another generation of Magnolia males hit that road once again to race late into the night. "Street racing is a form of unsanctioned and illegal motor car racing which takes place on public roads. Street racing can either be spontaneous or well-planned and coordinated."

With the long, straight stretch finally paved and the street cloaked in darkness some of the most enthusiastic racers came from the car clubs all around Seattle. The Clutchers, The Stokers and the Seattle Custom Club got an idea. Don Jenson, now in his 80's recalled how he got some white paint and painted a line right across the street, the starting line and finishing line, for a 1/4 mile race course. The club members driving mostly flathead fords all "hopped up hot-rods" would, late at night, challenge each other and race at speeds of 75-80 mph for bragging rights. "There was never a scratched fender or an accident." They ran with modified mufflers so the noise was not a factor, Jenson recalled that the drivers were almost always liars when it came to how fast they went: "Well, the best lairs always had the fasted cars, of course."

The tradition was revived in the 60's. When street racing was done on many flat stretches of road late at night. Shilshole was another popular street for teen-age boys in "souped up" cars to match machismo. Rob Hitchings admitted he had participated in the street racing on Magnolia Boulevard back then:

"Yeah. Guilty as charged! My 57 Pontiac wagon was a frequent winner (389 CID with an aftermarket Edelbrock double pumper 600 CFM 4 BBL carb) we even painted white lines across the Boulevard marking off a 1/4 mile and we would have someone with a stop watch time us. We would make a run north then turn around and do another. The races took place mostly on a late Friday PM or early Saturday AM. We would have lookouts for the then one Seattle Police patrol car on Magnolia just North of the big curve at the South end of the Boulevard and another just before the S curves at the North end by the Perkins Lane road. If they saw the police car they would flash their headlights and we would either scatter up the side streets or duck into the overlook parking spots "The Pits" on the Boulevard, short for "Passion Pit" where couples went to "Watch the submarine races"! Really to make-out.

"It was also a way for those of us more serious drag racers to test our cars before taking them to Seattle International Raceway or Arlington for the "Grundge Races" on Saturdays. There were those that just wanted to see how fast Dad's car could go in that 1/4 mile. It was mostly Magnolia kids though quite a few Queen Anne guys would come because there wasn't a straight stretch long enough on Queen Anne hill.

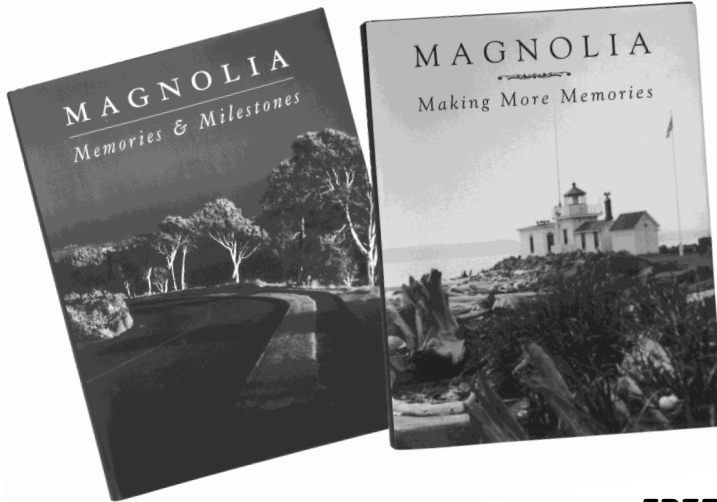
"Then there was also a little thing we called "RAT RACING" it was a sort of a high speed follow the leader through the side streets, alleys, etc. that ended up at "The Pits". There was more organized drag racing down at Golden Gardens I even saw a guy bring an actual dragster down on a trailer and make a run there".

#### Now...

The Boulevard remains an unlit street today so those who live there will not have to deal with glaring lights in their views. The days of dragster cars and Magnolia teens hanging out at local gas stations or working on making their cars go faster and spending every dime they had to do it have ceased. Now there are 7 banks in the Village, back then there were 7 gas stations. The races of today are more virtual on electronic gaming devices and the fad of the 40's and 60's have seemed to be replaced with a new industry of high tech race tracks and cars. But, in Magnolia and Queen Anne there are lots of stories and memories of the good ole days of Magnolia street racing. Just ask guys like Jo Anderson, Louie Isquith and Lee Zobrist. They have tales to tell. No one had a picture of it! Some say you can still see the faint white paint of the start line if you know where to look.



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*On History*