



## FCA PRESSING CITY FOR REAL SOLUTIONS TO LONGSTANDING TRAFFIC CONCERNS

By Catherine Bailey  
FCA Vice President

If traffic is getting you down, you're not alone. More than a year and a half of having the West Seattle high bridge out of commission has only heightened our neighborhood's long-standing frustrations about street congestion, pedestrian safety, and noise.

FCA organized an Oct. 12 meeting with representatives from the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and Seattle Police Department (SPD) to provide Fauntleroy residents with an opportunity to voice their concerns to officials as we all seek solutions to ongoing problems.

### Top-line issues

A team of FCA Board members opened the online meeting by outlining a set of issues in search of solutions by city officials. Fauntleroy resident Heather Marx, who leads the West Seattle Bridge Community Task Force, updated everyone about progress toward repairing the bridge and commented on SDOT's efforts to address certain problem areas.

She did not, however, offer much optimism about SDOT's ability to deliver on what West Seattle residents have been requesting, citing expense, the need for additional data-gathering, and jurisdiction.

The FCA team reviewed our association's priorities and requests, then provided examples where either SDOT or SPD could intervene. For instance, the re-routing of ferry traffic has made the intersection at 45th Ave. SW and SW Wildwood Place a major choke point. The volume of cars and trucks now waiting to move through this four-way stop creates long back-ups.

Drivers who try to avoid the slow-moving line often use side streets, frequently at high speed, to get ahead of other vehicles. In addition, impatient drivers are

The four-way stop in our business area has become such a traffic choke point that drivers are breezing right on through or diverting to side streets.



compromising the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other drivers by breezing right on through the intersection.

The FCA Board has asked for better enforcement at the intersection and traffic-calming solutions such as speed humps. Another possibility is to make directional changes on popular "cut-through" side streets, for instance, making SW Trenton one-way westbound.

FCA representatives also noted numerous complaints about vehicles making U-turns on Fauntleroy Way SW in order to get into the ferry queue. Drivers in that queue commonly block driveways, bus stops, and crosswalks and sometimes block through traffic by snaking around legally parked vehicles.

Better enforcement, improved signage, and roadway striping were among the solutions we proposed. To block U-turns, we suggested SDOT consider some type of barrier down the middle of the arterial.

The crosswalk between the Fauntleroy Schoolhouse and Fauntleroy Church warranted a (continued p. 2)

### IN THIS ISSUE

Fauntleroy Creek spawning season .....	2
Roxhill Bog .....	4
Ferry terminal comments .....	6
From the president.....	8

### HOW DO YOU WANT TO HEAR FROM FCA?

FCA now offers email as a primary means of communicating with members. Since we announced this option in June, many of you have signed up to receive *Neighbors* and periodic "Fauntleroy Flash" notifications by email.

Signing up requires a simple update of your communication preferences; just complete the form at [fauntleroy.net/flash](http://fauntleroy.net/flash). If you check "Neighbor Newsletter," you will start receiving it by email, NOT by mail.



## SPAWNERS POUR INTO CREEK

Liz Kennedy (above) was among a dozen volunteers who began this year's salmon watch on Fauntleroy Creek in mid October. A month later, they had tallied 10 - better than last year's 2, but most or all had been singles.

Then on Nov. 15, coho began pouring in from the cove with a wind-driven high tide. And they continued to come into the lower creek at a fast clip. By Nov. 19, 154 tick marks were on the board - the most in nine years.

Watchers also tallied more than 200 visitors to the spawning reach, most coming during three "open creeks" hosted by the Fauntleroy Watershed Council. Next up is checking for "home hatch" this winter. Photo by Judy Pickens

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## TRAFFIC *(continued)*

lengthy discussion. Vehicles travel both directions along this corridor at rates well above the speed limit, putting pedestrians (including many young children) at risk. We proposed a raised crosswalk and improved signage to slow traffic.

The long-standing problem of excessive noise and speed along Fauntleroy Way SW in the early morning prompted more lengthy discussion. We also aired what additional improvements might be made to key arterial intersections (such as SW Barton and 35th Ave. SW) where back-ups are common.

### Meeting follow-up

The FCA Board has been as proactive as possible this year about traffic safety. We enhanced our crossing-flag program and distributed SDOT signs reminding drivers about the new 25 mph speed limit and to treat all intersections as pedestrian crosswalks.

Such advocacy is important, but the Oct. 12 meeting and follow-up discussions are reminders that holding city officials accountable is essential. Unfortunately, only a few of the issues we raised before and during the meeting have been addressed so far by SPD and SDOT:

- SPD's traffic enforcement unit responded by placing motorcycle officers at some key hot spots; they ticketed drivers on at least two occasions in October.
- SDOT repainted lane markings along Fauntleroy Way SW in the ferry-queue area and will be installing "no line cutting" signage (RCW 46.61.735).
- SDOT has suggested installing curb bulbs to calm traffic at 45th Ave. SW and SW Wildwood Place and on both approaches to the schoolhouse/church crosswalk.
- SDOT is examining notorious "cut-through" side streets to see if speed humps/cushions are warranted and if the Seattle Fire Department will approve installing them.
- We have asked SDOT officials and City Councilwoman Lisa Herbold to come during rush hour for a neighborhood walkaround; scheduling is pending.

We hope to have more progress to report at FCA's Jan. 11 business meeting (details on p.5) and this newsletter will provide updates. In the meantime, use extra caution when you are out by car, bicycle, or foot as winter approaches.

## CULVERT DESIGN CONTINUING

Seattle Public Utilities has reached the 30% design milestone for its recommended design to replace the Fauntleroy Creek culvert under 45th Ave. SW. The project team hopes to have an engineering consultant on board in mid to late 2022 so that design can continue toward a target of 2025 for project completion.

In the meantime, the team is continuing to pursue grant funding, developing plans for removing invasive plant species in the project area, and initiating other work to support design development.

To stay updated on this project and sign up for listserv announcements, visit the project website at [seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/fauntleroy-creek-culverts](http://seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/fauntleroy-creek-culverts). For specific questions, email the project manager at [jonathan.brown@seattle.gov](mailto:jonathan.brown@seattle.gov) or call him at 206-386-4027.

## PLANTING TO MAKE GREEN SPACES GREENER



EarthCorps trainees spent Nov. 10 in the Kilbourne ravine, checking habitat restoration and adding 50 conifers and other native plants. When grant funding for the six-year project ended in 2019, the Fauntleroy Watershed Council began using donations to the Fauntleroy Watershed Stewardship Fund for such maintenance. To donate, go to [earthcorps.org/donate/donate-now/](http://earthcorps.org/donate/donate-now/) and make your gift to the fund “in honor or memory.” Photo by Casey Shultz



The annual “Green Seattle Day” in Lincoln Park drew three dozen volunteers on Nov. 6 to put in 284 native plants, as demonstrated above by forest steward Lisa Zander. The Green Seattle Partnership organized 22 such events around the city that day. Friends of Lincoln Park welcomes up to 30 volunteers twice a month to help steward the park; sign up at [seattle.green-citypartnerships.org/event/map/](http://seattle.green-citypartnerships.org/event/map/). Email [flip98136@gmail.com](mailto:flip98136@gmail.com) to inquire about bringing a larger group. Photo by Lisa McGinty

## IT'S TIME TO RENEW FOR 2022

By Sydney Hammerquist, Membership Chairwoman

The year about to close has been a dynamic one for our community and thus for FCA. We sought relief from traffic impacts caused by closure of the West Seattle high bridge. We secured front-row seats on the Fauntleroy Trestle & Transfer Span Replacement Project, and we welcomed residents to our monthly business meetings.

Now it's time to renew your membership so that you stay informed and help keep FCA's voice strong. Instead of asking you to renew in the spring as you may have been doing, we are now asking that you renew **by Dec. 31** so that all memberships align with the calendar year.

You may use the enclosed envelope to mail in your renewal check or renew at [fauntleroy.net/membership](http://fauntleroy.net/membership).

That website gives you the option of subscribing for automatic annual renewal, which means you'll never miss an edition of this newsletter. If you're already on automatic renewal, you don't have to do anything.

Thanks for your ongoing support!

**RENEWAL  
REMINDER**

## HUNT EVENTS NEED LEADERSHIP

Remember our pumpkin hunt in fall 2020 or our Easter egg hunt last spring? They were fun for all who participated, especially those who found hidden treasure.

If you might be interested in working with at least one other volunteer so we can continue these community-building events, email [volunteers@fauntleroy.net](mailto:volunteers@fauntleroy.net) or call FCA President Mike Dey at 206-661-0673.



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## FROM PAST TO PRESENT

# ROXHILL BOG ONLY REMNANT LEFT OF 'CRANBERRY MARSH'

By Judy Pickens

*For more than 50 years, Fauntleroy residents have relied on shopping just up the hill at Westwood Village. That major retail center paved over most of what the locals used to call "Cranberry Marsh." Now Roxhill Bog - one of the last remaining peat fens in the city - is the only remnant that's left and even it is in jeopardy.*

Peat fens (bogs) are low places where sphagnum moss and other plant matter accumulate and partially decay in the wet soil. The retreat of glaciers left many basins in this area's hilly terrain where bogs formed.

Because decomposition underground happens very slowly, peat may gain less than a millimeter in depth per year. The 6'-to-10' deep layer of peat in the Westwood-area bog likely took about 10,000 years to form.

Runoff from 90 surrounding acres originally entered the bog, where plants absorbed pollutants and the spongy peat filterer sediments. The bog became the headwaters for Longfellow Creek flowing to the north (but not Fauntleroy Creek over the hill to the west).

Like many natural features of the landscape, peat bogs began to disappear as settlers drained and filled them for development. Entrepreneurs also hastened the loss by selling peat to gardeners because the dead fibrous material keeps water and nutrients from leaching out of the soil.

When the bog was in its prime, neighborhood kids used large mats of sphagnum moss suspended in the soup as trampolines. They also took advantage of the pools that formed in what is now Roxhill Park to enjoy summer wading and winter skating. Jane Hastings skated there as a girl when her family lived a few blocks away before and during World War II.

Now a resident of Horizon House on First Hill, Jane recalls that two Japanese American families grew vegetables in the valley between 35th Ave. SW and SW Delridge. Having peat moss close at hand was a big asset for them.

In the mid 1930s, she had a bicycle accident that became a fond memory. One of the families found her in the gravel on Barton Street, treated her wounds, and took Jane and her bicycle home in their Model T truck.

The families were forced to abandon their land after Pearl Harbor but others soon took advantage of the peat. The 73rd Coast Artillery Regiment set up shop in several



(Above) This 1936 photo shows the full extent of the bog before paving of SW Barton St., construction of Westwood Village, and creation of Roxhill Park.

(Below) This 1969 photo looking southeast over Roxhill Park shows a portion of Westwood Village in the lower left and the residential housing that proliferated east and west of the park. Photos from Seattle Municipal Archives



city parks, including the Highland Park playground at 10th Ave. SW and SW Cloverdale. In addition to anti-aircraft guns, the encampment had one of the many searchlights employed during the war to defend against aerial attack. Jane draws the connection between the personnel there and the nearby bog.

"Our WWII new residents discovered the peat and spent their free time digging and transporting it to their personal little gardens. During cool weather, they built bonfires to warm their hands while they worked.

"What they did not know was that the fires never went out in the peat. They would flare in the summer, much to the frustration of the fire department and me as I lost access to my wild blackberry patch." (continued p. 5)



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Underground fires in peat bogs are very difficult to extinguish, as the Seattle Fire Department learned in 2017 when small warming fires set in Roxhill Park ignited the peat. After losing several trees to the smoldering heat, the department sought advice from Scotland, where such fires are more common.

Jane's parents moved to Capitol Hill in the early 1950s and, when they returned to West Seattle a decade later, the landscape of the bog had changed drastically. The winter of 1962 was the last for skaters there as a shopping-center developer had set its sights on the bog.

Paving streets in the area required digging deeply into the bog to find solid ground. When construction of Westwood Village finally began in the fall of 1964, the contractor had to do the same.

As explained in *West Side Story*, a pile driver pounded more than 1,000 12"-diameter logs into the not-so-terra firma. Some had to be driven as much as 40 feet before striking a hard enough layer to support buildings. By spring 1965, stores began to open while construction continued to finish the shopping center.

The following year, the developer donated 13 acres across SW Barton Street to the city for Roxhill Park. A few years later, the city capped the bog there with several inches of topsoil to create a grassy playfield.

Little changed until 1992 when a watershed action plan got the ball rolling to restore the 5.3-acre peat fen under that grass. A robust partnership of individuals,

public agencies, and private organizations propelled the project to completion, and signage went up to encourage people to come see the working bog.

The heavily urbanized system was not to be so easily restored, however. Within five years, the bog clearly was not working.

The water level was too low to maintain the natural peat base. Non-native plants were invading, wildlife was disappearing, and the area was becoming a place where people did not feel safe.

In 2019, a renewed partnership secured funding for a detailed study to understand what was happening with the groundwater. Last month, the hydrologist recommended steps that the community could take to retain enough water to keep the bog functioning.

Visit [roxhillpark.wordpress.com/roxhill-wetland-restoration-project/](http://roxhillpark.wordpress.com/roxhill-wetland-restoration-project/) for more about the bog and watch the *West Seattle Blog* for updates and how to get involved.

**Sources:** Roxhill Bog Committee, *West Seattle Blog*, Jane Hastings and Steve Winter correspondence, *Fauntleroy Legacy*, *West Side Story*, History Link, Southwest Seattle Historical Society, Sherwood Files (Seattle Parks)

## COMMUNITY EVENTS RETURNING

**KINDIE WEST MUSIC SERIES:** These popular performances for kids are continuing in the Emerald Room at the Fauntleroy Schoolhouse. Doors will open a half hour before each **10:30 am** Sunday performance:

Dec. 19 - Eli Rosenblatt	Feb. 6 - Harmonica Pocket
Jan 9 - Dani and the Bee	Feb. 20 - Eli Rosenblatt
Jan. 23 - The Not Its!	March 6 - Johnny Bregar

Purchase tickets at [brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com) for kids six months and older. Free parking west of the schoolhouse.

**HOLIDAY PORTRAITS:** Gail Ann will be decorating Room 4 in the Fauntleroy Schoolhouse for her holiday portrait pop-up studio for that special photo with your pet or extended family members. Call 206-371-0585 or visit [gailannphotography.com](http://gailannphotography.com) to make an appointment on **Dec. 11, 12, 20, or 21: 8:30 am - 2:00 pm**  
**Dec. 14 or 15: 3:00 - 7:00 pm.**

**2ND TIME SALE:** Fauntleroy Church expects to host this huge community sale the weekend of **March 12-13**. Call 206-932-5600 if you have quality items to donate.

**RECYCLE ROUNDUP:** Start setting aside recyclables for this free recycling event on **Sunday, March 27, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm** in the Fauntleroy Church parking lot.

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# WELCOME BACK

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# PUBLIC COMMENTS FACTORING INTO FERRY TERMINAL PLANNING

By Hadley Rodero, Washington State Ferries

Community involvement continues to drive Washington State Ferries' (WSF) approach to developing its Fauntleroy Trestle & Transfer Span Replacement Project.

Since launching the project earlier this year, WSF has been inviting and reviewing comments from community residents and meeting regularly with three advisory groups: community, technical, and executive.



Each of these groups has provided input on the purpose and need statement, which articulates the core need for the project. This statement will be foundational as the project advances to developing screening criteria and a list of project alternatives to be considered.

All three advisory group meetings are open to the public, and we invite community residents interested in hearing these conversations to attend. Visit the project website at [wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/sr-160-fauntleroy-terminal-trestle-transfer-span-replacement](http://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/sr-160-fauntleroy-terminal-trestle-transfer-span-replacement) to learn more about the advisory groups, view past meeting materials, or sign up to watch an upcoming meeting.

In addition to working with the advisory groups, WSF will be keeping community residents informed and involved through hosting virtual public meetings, updating the project website, emailing regular project updates, and conducting briefings with the FCA Board and other neighborhood groups.

This winter, we'll be asking community residents to share any further thoughts about the purpose and need statement, what WSF should consider as we evaluate options for the ferry terminal, and potential solutions.

Stay tuned for more information about future meetings and how you can be involved.

To sign up for project updates and meeting notices or to submit a comment or question at any time, email [fauntleroytermproj@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:fauntleroytermproj@wsdot.wa.gov). If you must connect by phone, my number is 206-470-0524.

## KEEP THOSE COMMENTS COMING

By Frank Immel, Fauntleroy Ferry Advisory Committee

Thanks to all of you who have submitted comments thus far to Washington State Ferries about the Fauntleroy Trestle & Transfer Span Replacement Project. They are being logged and reviewed before each meeting of the Community Advisory Group on which I and several other area residents serve.

Keep them coming! Only with your input will the many perspectives of our community to be heard.

Service on most routes in the ferry system, including the triangle route here, has been reduced because of staffing issues. If you plan to take a ferry soon, no matter where, be sure to check current sailing times.

The Washington State Department of Transportation recently restriped Fauntleroy Way SW. We're not yet sure of any impact the work may have on ferry user U-turns to get into the queue. With all our rain and wind, coupled with darkness, please remain vigilant while traveling near the terminal.



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- West Seattle Blog**
- Wildwood Market**

# WET, WIND, AND PANDEMIC FAIL TO DETER FALL FESTIVAL-GOERS

Despite rain and blustery wind, the 2021 edition of the Fauntleroy Fall Festival happened as planned on Oct. 24 in the Fauntleroy Church parking lot.

People came by car, stroller, and foot to pick up goodie bags, birdhouse kits, safety signs, hot cider, and more. The B Sharp Band and the Don't Ask Band enlivened the afternoon (with kids getting to sit in), and the many volunteers cheerfully greeted all comers.

Nearly 160 cars drove through and 200 children took salmon hats home to decorate. Jenny and Gordy Mandt stepped up to assist Reed Haggerty in organizing the event.



Members of the B Sharp Band set a lively tempo for the festival.



Mike Dey and David Haggerty distanced under cover to represent FCA with information and street-safety signs. All photos by Jenny Mandt

Festival-goers had goodie bags to explore when they got home.



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# FAUNTLEROY IS ONE OF SEATTLE'S SAFEST NEIGHBORHOODS

By FCA President Mike Dey

I hope Thanksgiving was a wonderful time for you to gather with family and friends, knowing that everyone was safely vaccinated. What an improvement over last year!

As many of you know, a representative of the Seattle Police Department (SPD) routinely attends our monthly business meetings. We frequently hear that our Southwest Precinct is one of the most desirable postings because West Seattle residents tend to see officers as helpful people. We also hear that Fauntleroy is one of the safest communities in the precinct and city.

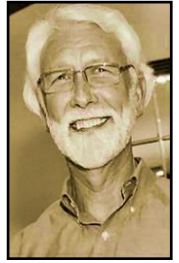
I must admit I thought these comments about Fauntleroy were intended to make us feel good and be satisfied with the attention we were receiving from SPD. When I learned about two dashboard links to access crime statistics across the city, I immediately went online to see the data for myself.

One site shows all reports of suspicious activity made by the public ([seattle.gov/police/information-and-data/computer-aided-dispatch-dashboard](http://seattle.gov/police/information-and-data/computer-aided-dispatch-dashboard)). The other shows all crime responses made by SPD ([seattle.gov/police/information-and-data/crime-dashboard](http://seattle.gov/police/information-and-data/crime-dashboard)). Both sets of data are broken out by neighborhood.

By both measures, Fauntleroy is one of the safest, if not *the* safest community, in the city. For example, this year to date Fauntleroy has had 127 cases of violent crime or property crime, which is almost exactly the same as Madison Park. Cases here are less than half of what neighborhoods around us have experienced.

I realize these data don't take into account how many people live in the various neighborhoods, but on an absolute numbers basis, seeing how we stack up was a feel-good moment for me!

Our standing certainly doesn't take away the sting of being a victim of a crime. What I hope it does do is remind us that we must take every opportunity to value this place we all call home.



## FCA LEADERSHIP

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