

SUNNYSIDE

Neighborhood News

October 2025

SUNNYSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SunnysidePortland.org

board@sunnysideportland.org

News from the President

By Chris Waldmann, SNA President

Hi neighbors! Can you feel the crisp in the air? This time of year is built for colorful strolls in the forest, apple-picking in the Gorge, and cozying up with warm cider by a fire-pit. It's also a great time to get involved with your neighborhood, whether that is helping a less able neighbor take care of their leaves or organizing a cleanup on your block!

Have a community-focused project that could use some funding? Whatever your idea, the SNA in partnership with SE Uplift is here to help! The SE Uplift Community Small Grants program is open for applications through Sunday, November 2nd. Winning projects may receive up to \$3000 to execute their vision to build community and increase civic engagement in the District 3 community. Projects must be sponsored by a nonprofit organization. Not a nonprofit? SNA can sponsor your project using our nonprofit status. More details are found at seuplift.org/grants.

Have you been the victim of a crime? I'm sorry. Did you know that there is a new option in Portland for victims of crime to seek justice outside the bounds of the traditional court-based system? The Portland Community Justice Program (PCJP) is a new option from a partnership between Lutheran Family Services and the Portland Police Bureau. The PCJP focuses on the victim of a crime and seeks to repair the harm done to them through relationship building, respect, responsibility, repair and reintegration. When filing a police report, tell the officer that you want to use the restorative justice program and they will contact PCJP to get the process started. You can read all about this innovative

program at lcsnw.org/program/portland-community-justice.

Thanks to the activism of local neighbors, there's a new crosswalk coming to Sunnyside. PBOT will install the new crosswalk across Stark St. at 43rd by the Multnomah Friends Meeting and the Mazamas. Hopefully this will help tame some of the out-of-control speeds on that stretch of Stark and provide an improved measure of safety to all who use it. Kudos to Sunnyside residents for getting this done!

Autumn is a great time to plant a new tree that can spend the winter soaking up all that rain before the next dry season. The city of Portland is giving them away for free! Urban Forestry will give out 300 trees every Saturday at community events around the city, so go plant a tree at no cost! Full program information is at portland.gov/trees/tree-planting/find-your-free-trees.

Did you know Sunnyside has a new farmer's market? Stop by the Asian Community Farmers Market on Saturdays through November 1st from noon-4 p.m. at the parking lot at SE Uplift (3534 SE Main St.) for all of your fall produce needs! All forms of payment are accepted, including EBT and WIC.

Want to see a film by a local documentarian? NW Documentary launched a monthly series of screenings, "Watch a Doc," at the Sunnyside Community Center (3520 SE Yamhill). Events are on the second Thursday of every month. October's film will be October Country, a "beautiful, spooky portrait of a family" from Portland-based filmmakers Michael Palmieri and Donel Mosher. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; films start at 7 p.m.. Drinks and snacks are provided. More information at nwdocumentary.org.

Upcoming Meetings

Location details and agendas are on Sunnysideportland.org.

October

Oct. 8th: SNA Board Meeting, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Oct. 13th: Land Use & Transportation Committee Meeting, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

November

Nov. 12th: General Meeting and SNA Board Meeting, 7:00-8:30

Nov 10th: Land Use & Transportation Committee Meeting, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

That's it for this month! We hope to see you in person in November for our next General Meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 12th.

Sunnyside Cat Walk

*By Hannah Wallace,
SNA Vice President*

Sunnysiders C. Meier and Jay Parasco met over a neighborhood cat named Lynx. It turned out that they both roam the streets of Sunnyside looking for cats—often the same ones. In August, Jay and C. led a group of cat lovers on the first Sunnyside Cat Walk! Despite the heat, it was loads of fun. We had maps of the neighborhood and tiny cat stickers to place where we met a feline.

On October 18th C. and Jay will be leading a second Cat Walk of Sunnyside. If you love cats and want to get to know our neighborhood cats even better, join us at the Sunnyside Piazza (Yamhill and 33rd) at 2 p.m. on the 18th! Follow @Cats_of_sunnyside on IG for more information.



Elizabeth Miller and her husband John Kachurek at a Pedalpalooza ride this summer

Getting to Know Your Neighbors

Erika Bolstad, SNA Member at Large

A Q&A with Elizabeth Miller, journalist at OPB

Elizabeth Miller is a journalist covering education at Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB). Elizabeth was drawn to broadcasting at Baldwin Wallace University in Ohio, where she signed up for the campus radio station on her first day of classes and eventually ran the news program. She arrived in Oregon in 2019 and settled in Sunnyside. At OPB, she has been overseeing “Class of 2025,” a project following students from kindergarten through high school graduation. The 13-year project recently concluded; OPB will air a one-hour documentary on Nov. 13th. We talked about the relationship-building that goes into a multi-year documentary project, why public media is so important in a city’s news ecosystem, and what she loves about living in Sunnyside. See more about the project at opb.org/specialreport/class-of-2025

Where do you come from?

Elizabeth: I’m from Columbus. I moved from Cleveland, Ohio, where I worked for the NPR/PBS station covering the Great Lakes and environmental issues.

How did you become a journalist?

Elizabeth: I worked for the Ohio House of Representatives as a page, that’s when I started getting more into news and politics, and I wanted to be a political reporter. Then I interned at one of the Columbus NPR stations, and I thought: ‘This is amazing.’ After college, I interned at NPR in D.C. on the national desk. That’s when I realized ‘I’m into this. I love it.’ Because before, I did not love public radio. As a child, my grandpa listened to it. He used to pick me up and drop me off at school, and it would always be playing; I hated it. I was like: ‘It’s

so boring. They sound so uninteresting.’ And now I love it.

When you were interviewed for the job, did they say you were going to be a part of the Class of 2025 project?

Elizabeth: It was a part of the interview, and part of the reason that I was interested in this job is because my boss had my job (before me), so he had experience and he obviously liked working there. I was excited to have an expert as a boss. I had also never covered education before, but yeah, they talked about this project.

Let’s back up. What is the project?

Elizabeth: This project is called the Class of 2025. In 2012, Gov. John Kitzhaber made a big pronouncement that by 2025, 100% of Oregon students were going to graduate high school. My boss, Rob Manning glommed onto that and thought, ‘This isn’t just numbers. This isn’t just statistics. These are real kids.’ He got approval from his boss to find some kids to follow all the way through their educational career. They all started in the same school: Earl Boyles Elementary School in Southeast Portland. The documentary focuses on seven kids. We tracked them all the way through high school. We’re telling you their stories. I picked it up in 2019 when the kids were in sixth grade.

What happened?

Elizabeth: The students are in a low- to middle-class area of Portland. You see that they’re just trying to make it; the resiliency comes through the challenges they’re dealing with—from an illness to a student who’s having behavioral issues. Attendance becomes a big challenge for several of the students and you hear how those challenges, and other things that they’re dealing with, get them through. But then there are things like a couple of our students are athletes in high school and how sports helps them. One student is in the school musical. You get to see her in that role and how important her relationship with her teacher is and how connected she feels to school because of her teacher. I think our goal is to show what it’s really like for students today.

This is 13 years of work and a lot of footage to pull from. How did you put together a documentary?

Elizabeth: Some years are spottier than others but we wanted to show the progression. That’s the coolest part of this project. You literally see these kids grow up.

This is something that’s brought up in the documentary, that the observation by a journalist changes the outcomes. Do you think that being a part of their lives changed some of their outcomes a little bit?

Elizabeth: Yes. We have direct evidence of that because a couple of the parents made a point to tell us at graduation that part of their kid graduating was because he was on this project.

It’s so interesting the way this project is intertwined in their lives. Do these kids text you? Do they get in touch with you? They’re not just subjects of a study or report.

Elizabeth: Yes, they’re not just subjects, like you said. I know so many things that parents have told me or that the kids have texted me that are not going to make it into any story, but it is part of relationship-building. We care about these kids. It’s hard not to. I definitely do text some of ‘em.

One thing I really pride myself on as a journalist is being transparent. I treat sources how I want to be treated. I think especially with young people, there’s a lot that needs to be explained. But we also have protections for the students. We don’t use their last names, which is not a traditional practice. I’m approaching them like I would any source, but also as young people—as teenagers who still have a lot of learning to do.

What are you going to do after this project is over?

Elizabeth: I’ll go back to reporting on education. One thing that I’m really interested in is the different new ways that schools are trying to serve students. One of those ways is through virtual schools. I think there’s a lot to be discovered about it, how that works for some students and doesn’t work for others.

What do you love about the Sunnyside neighborhood?

Elizabeth: I love the walkability. I love the variety of things to do. And there’s Laurelhurst Park. I don’t know if that’s technically in Sunnyside, but there’s Laurelhurst Park on one end. There’s the Baghdad Theater. There’s just so much to do and eat and drink and see. It’s also really easy to get to other places. Just hop on the 15 or the 14 bus! And it’s a very bike-friendly neighborhood!

Anything you'd like to see be better about Sunnyside?

Elizabeth: I think Sunnyside is perfect. My one gripe is a Portland gripe, which is the cars being able to park super close to stop signs and the edge of the street. It's the worst thing. Horrible for visibility. Horrible for safety.

Tell me why it's so important that everyone in Sunnyside supports public media.

Elizabeth: I feel like public media is the closest thing we have to truly community news, and it's free. The accessibility of it is amazing to me, but also just the ability to tell stories that go beyond the headline, beyond the shiny thing, and just give you that context. I think one other thing that public media is really vital for is connecting people to their community. You get to know people through stories, whether it's radio or online. I feel like public media does a great job of showing who people are and letting them share their own story. That's why I say 'community media' because it's like we're connecting our audience to their neighbors and other people in their lives and other people they might not ever have a connection with.

News From Sunnyside Environmental School (SES)

*By Sarah Centerwall
member-at-large and SES parent*

There are so many fun things happening at Sunnyside this month. We hope to see you all enjoying some of the events that are open to the community.

Bike Bus

The Sunnyside Bike Bus is back in business. On Friday mornings, when you are on your way to work or out walking your pet, you might hear some catchy music coming your way, along with a band of bike riders of all ages. Students and families meet up at designated spots around the neighborhood and bike to and from school together. Riding together makes biking to school safer and more fun. The Bike Bus promotes healthy and eco-friendly transportation to school and helps the environment at the same time.

At this time, there are close to 24 schools in the Portland area that have Bike Buses, each led by experienced parent volunteers. Our parent leaders usually use music and flags, making the Bike Bus easy to see and hear. Give them a wave if you see them zooming carefully by.

Library Fundraiser

Do you love books as much as we do? The SES librarian has found a great way to restock the SES library shelves through Titlewish. This is a fundraiser that is arranged directly through Follett Content, the organization that supplies books and other learning materials to the Sunnyside library. The fundraising goal is \$2,500, an amount that would add many wonderful new books to the library collection. New books are something that we are always in dire need of. If anyone is interested in donating you can go to the following link and send in a donation. www.titlewish.com/1096440

Harvest Fair

Many of the activities at our fall Harvest Fair are run by SES students. They take turns volunteering their time to make the fair a smash. There will be a Baked Goodie Boogie where you can win a cake, art room activities, a Seed Exchange, pies, food, 5th grade granola sales, an apple cider press, and much more.

The fair is open to everyone and entrance is free, but you need to buy tickets to pay for food, drinks and activities. This year there will even be a Teacher Splash! There is nothing more fun than watching students try and dunk teachers (or the principal!)—all in good fun and for a good cause, of course.

Where: Sunnyside Environmental School - 3421 SE Salmon St. (Enter at the back of the school.)

When: October 25th from 3-6 p.m. (There is a sensory soft start at 2:30 p.m. for guests who need a calmer environment to enjoy the fair.)

How: Tickets for food will be on sale after school October 23-24 near the portables and you can also buy them when you arrive at the fair.

Fundraising

Why all of these different fundraisers for the school, you may ask? Well, the sad truth is that public schools are never sufficiently funded by the state or by the district. It is up to the community to help give our students the education they deserve. SES provides a curriculum that goes above and beyond what a student might learn in an average public school. SES has been commended for their focus on the Social Emotional curriculum that contributes to the wellbeing of their students, their environmental curriculum and the place-

based learning that goes along with it. All of this, of course, costs money. We are thankful for our community that helps make it all happen. And while there are lots of asks, Sunnyside is always giving back. The middle school students volunteer in the community throughout the year. Among many other things, they make lunches for unhoused neighbors, pull invasive plants in the parks, do gardening at a local Buddhist temple and participate in beach cleanups with Surfrider.

Run, Walk, Move Day

Don't forget Run, Walk, Move Day is on Oct. 8th. To sponsor the event or donate prizes, contact Stephanie Renfro at stephnenfrom@gmail.com

Have questions about SES? Email sunnysideenvironmentalnews@gmail.com and maybe I'll answer them in a future column!

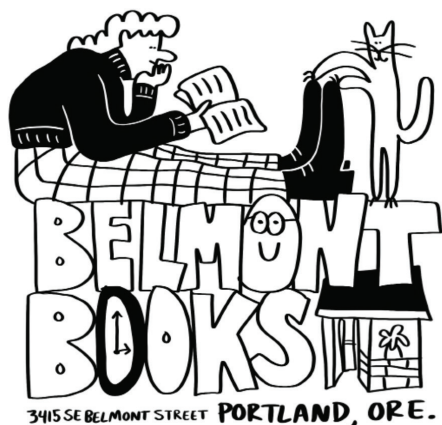
The Sunnyside Neighborhood News is published monthly by the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association.

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Any opinions expressed, unless specified, are not necessarily those of the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association or its board. **Sunnyside residents are welcome to submit articles for consideration that concern neighborhood issues, by emailing newsletter@sunnysideportland.org. Deadlines are the 15th of the month prior.** Many wonderful volunteer Sunnyside residents distribute the Neighborhood News.



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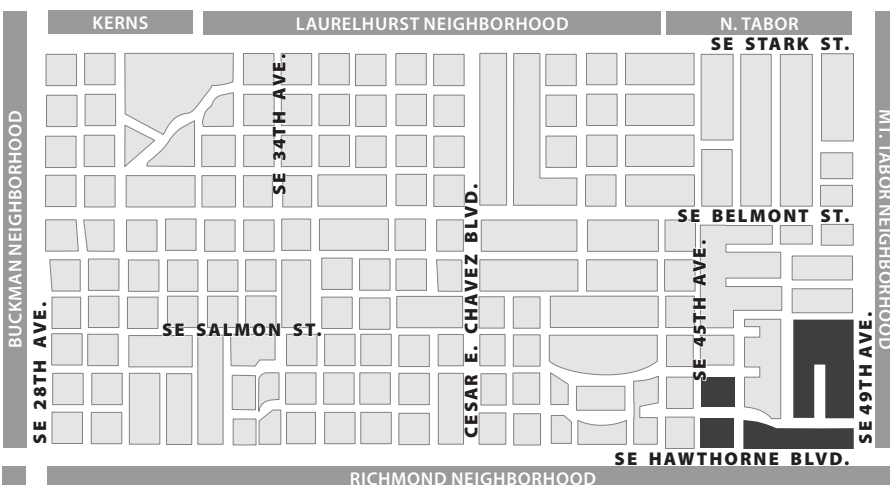


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Sunnyside Neighborhood 'Gap Map'

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