

## FLOATING HOMES ASSOCIATION



2329 Fairview Avenue East

Seattle, Washington 98102

Phone: 325-1132

Number 135

Newsletter

Spring 2000

## The Floating Homes Association's

38th Annual

## **MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

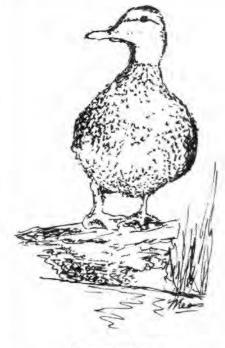
Thursday, April 27, 2000

George Pocock Memorial Rowing Center 3320 Fuhrman Avenue East 7:30 PM

UPDATES ON THE "VESSEL SCAM" PROPERTY TAX APPEAL SOUND TRANSIT PROJECT UNDER PORTAGE BAY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS COMPLIMENTARY REFRESHMENTS

Cookbooks and Tee / Sweatshirts On Sale Meet Your Neighbors from All the Docks

See You There!



## Beth's Birds

Three drawings by long-time houseboater Beth Means grace this issue of the Newsletter. Check out the charming lady above, the electronic painting of ducklings on Page 3, and one of our friendly geese in a typical pose for the Waterlog on Page 7.

# Taxes, Vessels, Tunnels

by Bill Keasler

Brace yourselves. Sound Transit's enormous tunneling project under our Portage Bay neighbors is supposed to begin this year. We have asked a Sound Transit representative to come talk to us about the project at the Annual Meeting.

Did our objection to a new liveaboard marina on Westlake a couple years ago spiral into DNR's recent statewide attack on liveaboard boats? Is Seattle's Department of Construction and Land Use now tilting toward granting permits for the Lake Union Crew barges on Fairview? Hear what happens next in the "Vessel Scam" at the Annual Meeting.

Six floating homes coops and the King County Assessor's office still appear to have their hands locked around each other's throats. The outcome of their struggle will affect us all. Get a (short) status update on the Byzantine appeals process at the Annual Meeting.

See you at the Annual Meeting on April 27th...

## **Association Update**

## LYNN STREET PARK RETAINING WALL PROJECT

A public meeting was held in February to discuss the Lynn Street Park renovation plans. Up to \$10,000 in Neighborhood Matching Fund monies are available that could be used to purchase art tiles to decorate the proposed new retaining wall for the Laurel Dowdy and Phyllis park. Hatfield, residents on the houseboat dock adjacent to the park, are writing a Small and Simple grant to obtain these funds. The design of the tiles could involve a lot of people in the neighborhood. After they are designed, Steve Roaches of Aruba Tile will fabricate them. They will then be cemented to the new wall in a mosaic pattern, giving a much-needed personal touch to the park. More volunteers are needed to attain the \$10,000 matchingfund goal necessary to receive the City funding. To help with this project in any way, please call Mary Jones at 860-9293.

#### CARINA BAR & GRILL

This restaurant/club has taken over the old Azteca/Hungry Turtle building at the foot of Roanoke Street on Fairview and for the past year, the neighborhood has watched with increasing concern, its use as a nightclub that attracts over 270 people into the area at one time. There have been meetings with neighbors speaking repeatedly about noise from the music and high volume traffic, safety concerns from intoxicated customers, illegal parking, damaged property, cars and trucks obstructing emergency

vehicle access, public drinking and drug use, public urination, litter, and a markedly diminished quality of life in our neighborhood. Two of the meetings were attended by over 45 neighbors, Officer Osborne (Community Police Representative), Bonnie Glen from the City Attorneys Office, the Liquor Control Board, Med Shaariatamavari (owner of the Carina) with his head of security, Randy Nelson, and Molly Cadranell, owner of the property. A representative from DCLU suggested using a process that reviews city codes and permits on the building with accompanying assessment of current usage, which would detriment compliance. review would only cost \$660 which neighbors are willing to pay. ECC has agreed to be "our bank" so contributions can be made payable to Eastlake Community Council/2501 Checks should be in an envelope addressed to Box #3/2501 Fund and dropped off at Lake Union Mail (117 E. Louisa St.)

## TOPS AT SEWARD SCHOOL THEATER

February 11-12 marked the opening of the TOPS Theater, also known as the Gym, with three remarkable performances by TOPS Middle Schoolers of Linda Barry's "The Good Times are Killing Me." Cheers to the cast and backstage folks who made it happen! The play attracted large crowds to the new space, and the TOPS community realized from this production that the "theater" needs work. They are applying for a Dept. of

Neighborhoods Matching Fund grant to finish the theater space so it can effectively serve as both a theater and a gym. The monies would be used for acoustic tiles and panels, hanging curtains, and improving the sound and lighting systems. Neighborhood support is needed, in spirit as well as pledged hours to work on the project this fall. The next big event at TOPS will be the Elementary School production of "James and the Giant Peach" on June 2 and 3. That same weekend student artwork will be hanging throughout the building and in neighborhood businesses for the TOPS/ Eastlake Artwalk. Join us! We're glad to be home in Eastlake! If you would like to pledge hours towards the grant or help in another way, please call Penny Bolton, 325-5074.

## DESIGN WORKSHOPS FOR ROGERS PLAY FIELD

Friends of Rogers Play field is sponsoring two design workshops to bring a creative playground environment and other amenities to Rogers Field at 2501 Eastlake. We have secured a Small & Simple grant from the City, hired a landscape architect, and now need input from the park-using community. The upcoming design workshops will be held in the TOPS/Seward cafeteria on Monday, May 15th at 6:30 p.m. and Monday, June 12th at 6:30 p.m. If neither of the workshops are convenient to your schedule, surveys are being distributed throughout the neighborhood to gather your input. For more info, please call Laurie Tusser-McNeill at 323-4556.

# THE FLOATING HOMES ASSOCIATION'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Office Manager: Jann McFarland Phone: 325-1132/323-3489

> Office Hours: T.B.D. Messages Monitored Daily

Newsletter: Jann & Bill



**Beth Means** 

## The Appraised Value of Mud

By Jim Smith

The value of the land under our houseboat colony was increased dramatically for the tax year payable in 1999 due to assessments made by a different group within the Assessor's Office who are more experienced in residential real estate.

What is disturbing for the long run is the new method used in the assessment of the underwater land. Before the change, the assessed value was based upon a single dollar amount per square foot.

The houseboat itself is personal property and that concept did not change although the This new approach of appraising the underwater land is rather a hybrid. The total value of the moorage was based on the sale of other houseboat moorages, private docks being converted to co-op docks for the most part. Then the assessor drew lot plans under each houseboat. A somewhat arbitrary value that attempted to recognize lot was then assigned to each lot.

This model worked for condo docks, caused distortions on co-ops, and the private docks were not revalued at all.

Visualizing a houseboat moorage being divided into lots has a reasonable feel to it until the practical and administrative page is turned. The values placed upon the lots do not reflect reality or even the approximate relative value between lots although this was the intent. When it was pointed out that many of the lots crossed boundaries of Fee, DNR and City properties, the assessor did go back and assign percentages to the lots to recognize this.

Using the lot approach could be done

with a fair degree accuracy, but the effort and dedication that would be required by the Assessor's Office will not happen.

In fact for this tax year yet another modification has been made. A flat \$25 per sq. ft. valuation is now applied to the entire property, a move in the right direction, I believe. The lots, however, are still in place with new values applied. Also lots that cross boundaries are no longer divided on a percentage basis. For the most part, at least for my moorage, The Log Foundation, if any part of the lot falls on the Fee portion then the entire value is placed in the Fee column. This increased The Log Foundation Fee value \$560,000.

The real problem with assigning values to lots is that they do not dynamically reflect market value and this will inevitably lead to major distortions. My guess is that in ten years the finite nature of the DNR lease may well begin to make itself felt in the market, and there is no good way for this type of change to the lot value to be reflected.

The Assessor is required only to value property at fair market value. The concept of dividing the value between the house and the ground is more of an academic distinction and could be modified if the practical reasons for doing so are compelling. The most practical approach that I can see is to have a single dollar amount per square foot for all and to let the remaining value apply to the personal property.

The primary advantage to us to having most of the value carried on the houseboat itself concerns the formula within the DNR lease.

The DNR uses the fee value as a base for the lease amount. This formula is leveraged. As a benchmark I took the total value of the assessor lot approach for The Log Foundation and calculated what the real estate tax would be if the entire area were all Fee. I compared this benchmark amount with what we will be actually paying for the DNR, the DNR bond, The City permit, and the Fee tax. When all is caught up we will be paying a 20% premium over taxes in government charges. Down the road the implications with the DNR may even be much greater.

There are six moorages who are working together with Harley Hoppe and his extremely capable lawyer, Chuck Gordon, in appealing this tax increase in the hope that the Assessors Office and The Floating Homes Association can get together in an open discussion to work out what would be best for both. What we need is an Assessor who will look at the differences between houseboats and land houses rather than one who is looking for similarities.

The appeal process for 1999 is ongoing and intense. The last hearing was with the State Board of Appeals. It included eight people from the Assessor's Office, four from the houseboats as well as some visitors from our community. It lasted for two full days. We are asking that the tax be completely rolled back and that they start from scratch. We will receive the results probably this summer. A court case could follow.

little roadside stand 3 kms up the road. From there we caught a ride to Oaxaca City (185 kms away). The driver negotiated a flatbed "tow truck" to retrieve the car and it was back at the VW Agency by 9 AM the next morning (250 kms of horrible road)! After waiting a week for the new part, we "punted" and had the pan welded-soldered for about \$35. Then off again, this time to Cocoyoc Hacienda-spa near Cuernavaca, then back to Zihuatanejo for a couple more weeks and finally back up the coast to Tucson. Even though the NEW Beetle people don't wave to each other like OLD Beetle people do, there still is a camaraderie within the VW community and as usual, the Mexican people went beyond the call of duty to help us. I wonder how many of us would stop to help a carload of Mexicans stranded on a remote mountainside in the U.S.??"...

Sheri Lockwood describes her winter trip to Europe where she has friends in nearly every country ... "I had a great trip---I visited friends I met while living in Poland. I went first to Lausanne, Switzerland where it was "hunt supper" season, so we had interesting food I'd never tasted before, such as boar stew. We drove to Brescia, Italy and had a flat tire in the van in the snow. Our friends took us to their favorite sites and viewpoints, but it was foggy, so we couldn't see what we were supposed to see - but shapes in the fog encouraged the imagination ... then to Zurich where I got a plane to Mumbai or Bombay, to visit more friends. A monkey stole my lunch, but I fought back. People wanted to get their picture taken with me because my hair is blonde. I had a picture with a cobra around my neck, I went to see a guru, took a Yoga lesson, participated in Scottish St. Andrew's Day celebration and dances, went to a salt water swimming pool shaped like India before the partition, and saw and heard things I'd

**NEVER** seen and heard before. Then to Vienna, to visit another friend and take in 5 Christmas Fairs - like street fairs, except for Christmas things. We visited great coffee houses, the dazzling architecture of the **Hundert-Wasser** house and museum, the Lippizaner stallions and I fell down and broke my elbow

three days before I had to go home!" ...

Susan & Tom Susor (Boat Street) flew into Anchorage, Alaska for the start of the Iditarod sled dog race. After this start, everyone goes 30 miles away to Wasilla where the official start of the race is held. Susan says Bob Burk and Blair Robbins (Log Foundation) were there too, but they didn't run into each other. They also spent a week in New Orleans, while Susan attended a nursing conference ... Then to Orlando, Florida for a gathering of the Experimental Aircraft Association where people fly in from all over the world many in planes they built themselves. Everyone walks

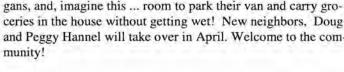
around looking at the planes, meeting new people and catching up on news with old friends, and learning what's new in aviation ... For those of you who are relatively new to the community - like in the last 20 ??years?? Tom has been building his own airplane in the spare bedroom on their houseboat. I guess this is in place of the never ending houseboat remodeling project ... Mark and Jamie Thurner-Sanderson (Log Foundation) recently were in Palm Springs visiting Jamie's sister -- this was while we were all here sitting in the rain ... Their next door neighbors, Alan and Elizabeth Shaw recently returned from a 3 week vacation to New Zealand ... Linda Knight, who did not move to Montana (see last issue), went on her first cruise - to the Caribbean — with 2 friends she grew up with in Minnesota. Linda says her worst anxiety was that she would uncontrollably fling herself off the ship into the ocean. When this did not happen, she was a little disappointed, but made up for it their last night at sea when the 3 of them had a few drinks and lay around the stateroom floor giggling like teenagers rolling in sync with the ship's rolls. After the cruise was over, they drove down to Cocoa Beach, Florida and hunted for shells. When Linda couldn't find any real spectacular ones, she slipped into a shop and bought some so she could impress her parents on their annual Easter visit to Seattle from Wisconsin ... She said they saw pelicans and armadillos on the cruise ... Those armadillos just can't stay out of the shipping lanes.

## WELCOME ABOARD

2420 Westlake Dock welcomes new houseboat owners, Joe and Carol Hartley. Joe has an interest in wooden boats which should be useful here on the lake. They will use their new place as an in-city retreat ... Log Foundation welcomes Mark Worthington to dock 2025. Mark bought Kris & Clay Eaton's houseboat and Eatons have moved to Bainbridge Island water-

> front. It will sure be different without them here as they have been here since the early 70's and have always been active in both dock & co-op activities. Clay grew up on Bainbridge island so they have a lot of ties over there ... Changing hands in Mallard Cove is Houseboat #18, now out from under the long time command of resident dock legends, Kay Jones and Theresa Wolter. They've gone upscale, to Richmond Beach salt water, and a multi-car garage for his Auston Healy, Mor-

gans, and, imagine this ... room to park their van and carry groceries in the house without getting wet! New neighbors, Doug and Peggy Hannel will take over in April. Welcome to the community!



If you have items for the next issue of the newsletter, call Jann McFarland at 323-3489 or e-mail at jann-sid@msn.com or call the FHA Office at 325-1132.

# Remembering Peggy and Tom Stockley

By Jeri Callahan

Tom & Peggy left their suburban Clyde Hill home over 18 years ago for their bright blue houseboat on Tenas Chuck moorage. Although they rented for a year before buying, they immediately plunged into both the lake and the life of their new community supporting the Center for Wooden Boats and the drive to save the Virginia V, the Eastlake Tomorrow project, as well as the Eastlake Land Trust committee which often met at their home.

Long before she became Office Manager for the FHA, Peggy served on the Board, helped with our cookbook, and marketing our various "cottage industries". Over the years, she also has done a "never-to-be-equaled" job on the publicity for our biannual houseboat tour. She edited our FHA newsletter and Tom donated wine & wine tasting parties for our various fund raisers. Both have staffed our display table at the Fremont Fair.

As Tom's fame as a wine authority grew, one corner of their houseboat became weighted down by the bottles of wines brought almost daily by UPS. We lucky neighbors often would find 2 or 3 bottles of wine by our front doors from the Wine Cupid, Wine Bunny, Wine Turkey, Wine Santa, etc. They both spent time keeping our community glued together, and most of the people on Tenas Chuck enjoyed the Stockley hospitality, whether a simple glass of wine on their deck, or dinner in their bamboo-shaded dining alcove. Tom also published an occasional Tenas Chuck newsletter, covering everything from dock rule reminders, to announcing the annual "Bach on the Dock" summer concert featuring their daughter, Paige on the cello.

They both played key roles in our successful journey to becoming a co-op. Peggy made it a priority to officially call



Peggy and Tom in Greece 1994



Peggy, Jeri and Jan in their Pre-Winter Hibernation Swim October 14, 1995

on Tenas Chuck newcomers to welcome them, and tactfully explain the various idiosyncrasies of our floating village. Perhaps most extraordinary were their daily acts of simple human kindness, making time to chat with other neighbors-- from sharing recipes to spreading the word of a planned moonlight skinny dip, and sharing travel stories filled with treasured villas, small hotels, and charming restaurants they had found.

There are some people who will be a part of your memories forever, and Peggy and Tom are two of them. The Stockley's daughters, Paige and Dina Moreno with husband, Mario, and "grandbaby", Luisa plan to keep the houseboat in the family.

# **Passages**

## BOB BLAIR, by George Yeannakis

Bob Blair, a long time houseboater, passed away at his home in Springfield, Oregon late last fall. Bob had lived in his houseboat since stopping in Seattle on his way to Alaska in 1966. He never made it to Alaska, because he was captivated by the houseboat community. Bob was enlisted to help save the "outlaw houseboats" facing destruction by the City, by hooking up houseboat docks to the city sewer lines, a major milestone in our houseboat history. Part of his "compensation" was a houseboat slip at the Tenas Chuck moorage that was secured for him by Terry Pettus. Bob's home has remained on this site for over 30 years. Bob graduated from the U of W with a degree in accounting and although he preferred to putter around his boat, he reluctantly entered the corporate world. He moved to Springfield 13 years ago to work for Fred Meyer, and after retiring, pursued his avocation of woodcarving. Bob's houseboat was a reflection of his personality. Many would say that it was constantly in need of repairs, while others would see the simple eclectic charm in its (and his) rustic appearance! He was a good friend and will be missed.

#### LEONARD JOHNSTON, by Marty Alexander

The houseboat community lost another of the dwindling number of "old timers" last month. Leonard Johnston lived on the lake for over 50 years, and a few weeks ago his friends and neighbors spread his ashes off the front porch of his beloved turquoise and lavender end-moorage houseboat on Westlake. The little house, which Leonard would proudly tell you he bought for \$1700 "way back when", has been tied at several addresses around the lake, suffering at least two evictions before the moorage situation became more secure. It remains much as it has been for all its 50 years — one story, simple,



**Leonard Johnston** 

cozy and full of memorabilia. Leonard and his late wife Marie, were founding members of the 2460 Inc. houseboat cooperative. He spent most of his time in the warm months just sitting on his deck watching the world go by. When asked why he and Marie didn't travel after he retired from his career as a baker. Leonard would pipe right back with, "well, why

would I want to do that? This here's heaven!" After Marie passed away, we suggested that perhaps a cruise would be fun. "The world cruises right by here every day and I don't have to

move!" Leonard always had a smile, a joke, and a friendly word for everyone — we will miss him very much.

#### GEORGE NEALE, by George Johnston

On November 17, 1999 Seattle's Floating Homes community lost its "equivalent of George Washington". George Neale was a soft spoken nice guy with determination and vision. In the 1960's when he was in his mid-forties, his leadership resulted in salvation for most of the 100 houseboats displaced by the SR520 Portage Bay viaduct construction and culminated in the creation of what is now the Floating Homes Association. He, with me in tow, canvassed Seattle's houseboat owners promoting a new association. He also ap-

proached the moorage owners on the east side of Lake Union and convinced a majority to extend their docks to accommodate six displaced houseboats per dock. The houseboat owners fronted the money to extend the docks and got their money back in moorage.

George and his wife, Irene owned their houseboat from 1947 to 1974. Their houseboat was # G



George Neale

on the south side of 2017 Fairview Ave. East, (now a The Log Foundation dock) at the East Newton Street end. They sold the houseboat to Mary Gey for around \$7,000. George was the first president of the Association and was subsequently elected President Emeritus by the Executive Committee. It was George Neale and the Executive Committee who hired Terry Pettus as Secretary when the lobbying of City Hall became too much for George to continue.

To illustrate George Neale's contribution to the then "on the ropes" houseboat community, "Doc" Freeman, owner of many rental docks, said it best after listening to Neale's dock extension proposal with "You know, if you weren't such a nice guy, I wouldn't even bother to talk to you."

George Neale was primarily responsible for saving the houseboat community that we have today.



By Jann McFarland

Well, not only do I have to compete with one witty, competent, enthusiastic writer, but two of them, whew! Hats off and lots of rousing cheers to Sheri Lockwood who has been writing the Waterlog since time began and probably before she was born, I believe she invented it. It has become a fun part of the newsletter, to be enjoyed after reading all the "heavy stuff" — news that is necessary to impart, but not always good. When Sheri began to suffer from serious "burnout," recently, Peggy Stockley, as Editor of the newsletter stepped in and helped Sheri put out the column. So I will be attempting to fill some mighty big shoes ...

## FLOTSAM & JETSAM

There are three new "cement float" houseboats being built along the Fraser River levy outside of Ladner, BC, near Vancouver, with destinations in Lake Union and Portage Bay. They will be barged down separately as they are completed later this spring, and will be swapped out with the old houseboats currently in their moorages. One of the old houseboats has been donated to the Center for Wooden Boats ... Our FHA is now back in contact with members of the Idaho Floating Homes Association. Powell Shoemaker, current President writes to us ... "I don't know if you know much about our group over here. There are 94 float homes on Lake Pend Oreille which is about 30 miles north of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Pend Oreille is approximately 44 miles long and goes as deep as 1150 feet. During WWII there was a naval training base there that processed 60,000 sailors at a time. The base was the largest city in Idaho at that time. Today, there is still a naval facility on that site that tests submarine warfare devices. The 94 float homes are within five different marinas in the small town of Bayview, Idaho. The largest grouping in one marina is 33 homes. The State has banned the construction of new float homes, however existing homes may be completely remodeled as long as they conform to the original log dimensions. We do not have a Floating Homes Office, but we all have Email! Three years ago we had our first floating homes tour and felt it was very successful for our first time out of the box. We are planning to have another one this year. Two years ago we were successful in passing a bill which was signed into law by the governor of Idaho requiring marinas to have a lease with the float home owner and requires tenants and marinas to meet certain obligations as provided for in the lease. We did not achieve rent control, but arbitration is provided for in the law, and binding arbitration is provided in the lease we submit to the marina. We look forward to sharing info and stories with your group in the future. I grew up in Ballard and easily recall when float homes were nothing as they are now" ... Giff Jones, the "Other" Jones reports the big news from Mallard

Cove is the imposing townhouse construction project next door is due for completion sometime this summer. This is the same project that "temporarily" (for nearly 2 years) eliminated 44 parking spots, and reduced dock access to a narrow, 200 yard long path from Roanoke Street, since August, 1998. The experience has given many a less than complimentary opinion of "property developers", certainly of those closest at hand ... read on for more ... This is the first of three recent winters that there hasn't been a storm-related event on the dock -- the same houseboat broke loose 2 years in a row. This year's one tragic loss was the beautiful, mature old sweet gum tree that used to guard the head of the dock, and provide shade and respite for all creatures including the human variety. It fell needlessly, 3 days before thanksgiving-- to the developer's chainsaw...

About 40 friends and family of Art Hemenway (Log Foundation) came to his houseboat for a landmark birthday celebration. He won't reveal his age, but the cake said he was 21 X 4+1 years old. There were people dancing the tango, rock and roll, and a mixture of the two by the end of the evening. Hazel Nigh (now 91) came over to help Art feel younger and says the secret to a long life is Vodka, and lots of it! ... The time has finally arrived when Peter and Brigette Erickson (Log Foundation) who live on the southwest end of dock 2025 are going for a second story. They have been talking about it for 20 years so we have all had a nice reprieve, but it is still hard to give up our open views. They hope to begin construction in the next few months ... Old timer, Hellen Nelson (The Lake Union), who just celebrated her 89th birthday recently had to move off the lake to be closer to her family. She is at Alterra in Lynnwood and misses her houseboat and friends very much. Her phone number is 425-774-3300. X221, and address is 18706 36th Ave. W., Lynnwood, WA 98037. She would love to hear from us.

#### ANCHORS AWEIGH

Peter and Zelda Howard on DOX co-op report on their latest Mexican travel adventures ... "After 9 years of 6 month long figure eights through Mexico in our 1977 VW van, and one unsatisfactory three week Christmas trip in 1998, we decided to take our new 2000 Turbo Beetle to Mexico for 4 months. We left mid November and headed for Zihuatanejo on the west coast of Mexico, stopping in many towns along the way. Close to Zihuatanejo, the morning temperature was below freezing and we used our heated seats, several hours later it was 102 degrees in Lazaro Cardenas (north of Z.)!! Over Christmas, 25 members of the Howard family joined us in Zihuatanejo for a millennium party. The beachfront in downtown Z. was lined with fireworks tubes and our party was on the 3rd floor of a hotel right above them ... it was spectacular. We left Zihuatanejo and went south to Zipolite' ... nude, hippy type beach in Oaxaca, where we stayed for 3 weeks of surf and solitude. In early February we left for Oaxaca City, inland on Highway 175 which goes from sea level up to 9,000 feet before dropping back into the valley (about 6,000 feet up). About 3,000 feet up in jungle-coffee country on very rough road, a rock punched a big hole in the oil pan and dumped oil in seconds. Another VW finally showed up and they brought help - a one-ton Ford truck and some coffee workers who got the car towed to their

# Floating Homes Association 2329 Fairview Avenue East Seattle, WA 98102

PLOATING HOMES ASSOCIATION Hel	The Floating Homes Association  MEMBERSHIP FORM  Preserve and Protect Seattle's Colorful Houseboat Colony.  Join the Floating Homes Association Today!
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