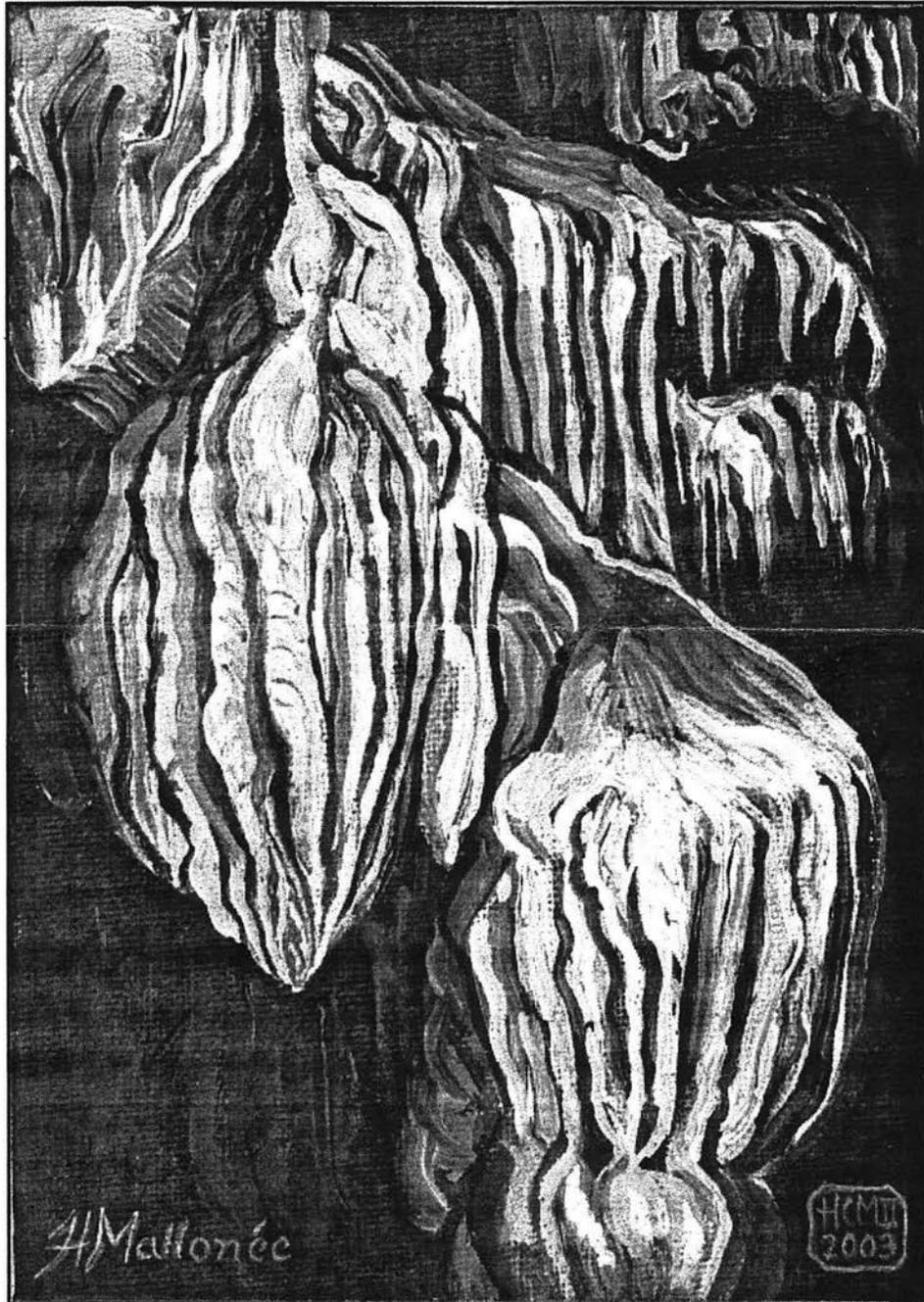




# Cascade Caver

The Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society



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# Cascade Caver

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All material to be published, subscription requests, renewals, address changes, and exchange publications should be sent to the Grotto address.

## GROTTO MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Cascade Grotto is \$15 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is free to regular members. Membership for each additional family member is \$2 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is \$15 per year. Subscription via email is \$11 per year.

## GROTTO ADDRESS

Cascade Grotto; P.O. Box 66623, Seattle, WA 98166. This post office box should be used for both the grotto and for the *Cascade Caver*.

## GROTTO OFFICERS

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## MEETINGS

Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7 p.m. on the third Friday of each month at the Shoreline Community Center in the Hamlin Room. The Community Center is at 18560 1st Ave. NE in Shoreline. Please see the map on the back cover of this issue.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Please notify Eve Proper of any upcoming trips. Contact Jennifer Dorman at idahocaver@gemstategrotto.com for any Gem State Grotto trips. Contact Claude Koch at claudekoch@uswest.net for any Willamette Valley Grotto trips.

April 13	Ape Cave graffiti cleanup - Eve Proper
April 26-27	Gem State Succor Creek vertical trip
May 24-26	Trout Lake caving weekend
May 31-June 1	NCRC small-party rescue training in Troutdale - Dave McElmurray
Aug. 4-8	NSS Convention in Porterville, Calif.
Aug. 30-Sept. 1	NCA regional on Vancouver Island
Sept. 19-22	Western Regional near Bend - Claude Koch

## COVER

"Flowstone en grisaille" by Hester Mallonee. See her work at Barnes and Noble in Federal Way all this month; details on page 13.

## Come to Convention 2003 in sunny California

Convention is only four months away! Are you ready?

If you haven't though about making room in your schedule for Convention yet, now is the time. To get the cheap registration rate, you must register by June 15. And you'll want to check out your vacation time to make sure you have a week off.

But why go? The Cascade Grotto has not been well represented in recent years, unfortunately – Van Bergen was our only member in attendance last year. With Convention much closer to home this time around, we don't have any excuse for failing to make a good showing.

Convention will be held Aug. 4-8 in Porterville, Calif. It's a two-day drive, or you can fly into Fresno, the closest commercial airport with direct service from Seattle.

So what do you get out of going to Convention?

- Great caving. There are some spectacular (limestone) caves in the area, including lots of fun vertical stuff.
- Great company. Not only can you catch up with your fellow Northwest cavers, you can meet NSS members from all over the country.
- Caving vendors. Tired of mail order? Yes, actually see gear before you buy it!
- Terminal Siphons. See Van play a (wet) show.
- Educational opportunities. Classes in geology, biology, vertical systems, cave mapping and more.
- Salons. Check out fine cave art, including CG member Hester Mallonee's work.
- Parties. If you want to spend your whole week in the hot tub, go for it.
- A cheap, safe vacation. Porterville probably isn't high on most terrorists' lists.
- Warm weather. It's a strange concept, but I understand there will be a "sun" during much of the Convention, generating heat and light.

So start planning now for your trip to Convention! ❖

## Meet your grotto officers

Michael McCormack, President

Been organized caving since 1997. While I spend my time predominately in alpine limestone caves, I got my start caving as a 10 year old down in Lava Beds National monument. Lava Tubes still have a spot in my heart.

I tend to be a project caver: surveys, cleaning trips that sort of thing, but also enjoy a good bop. You can't see all the caves with projects, after all. After three years in the Willamette Valley Grotto, I became disenchanted with the political secretive cliques that make up that grotto and took a two-year hiatus from caving when we moved to Seattle.

After settling in here, I found that the Cascade Grotto and even Gem State have very little in common with the WVG and jumped back into caving with a vengeance. I've been pleasantly surprised with the welcome and open atmosphere and would be happy to help maintain that attitude.

Despite the tendency for cavers to be amateur geologists, I don't do rocks. But I do adore maps.

Favorite Cave: Papoose

Favorite Tube: Lava Beds National Monument: Catacombs (OK, it's a tourist cave, I admit it), and Deadhorse (preferably the crawly back end)

Favorite Pit: McKenzies

Favorite activity in a cave: Either a compression squeeze or ascending through a waterfall.

Biggest Caving Mistake: Canceling a trip to Lecheguilla because of work. Not only canceled my trip, but my wife's, and my sponsor's trip as well.

Best Trip: 14 hour trip to the Knee Grinder in Bigfoot.

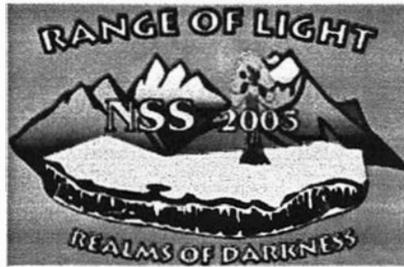
Things you most likely to hear from me while hiking: "Why can't they put these caves by a road!"

Things I'm NOT:

I'm not secretive, and I don't believe in hiding stuff from other cavers. I do tend to temper it by requiring recommendation or personal experience of the caver.

The stuff that isn't *as* important to the issue:

*continued on page 15*



# “Caver Reports” compares coveralls

By Eve Proper

Ready to move beyond cotton coveralls to a real waterproof caving suit?

For many of our local caves, cheap coveralls are all that are needed, albeit with a judicious selection of fleece and polypro undergarments for warmth. On a trip to Papoose last year, though, while hanging on-rope in a waterfall, I really wished I had something more substantial. And if you're heading up to Regional this year, you'll definitely want to consider something appropriate for the cold, wet Vancouver Island caves.

Despite modern miracle fibers, a waterproof caving suit is still a matter of trade-offs. Truly waterproof coveralls, like PVC duck suits, can lead to overheating (and trapping your sweat inside, making you wet anyway). Effective sleeve and ankle cuffs keep out water, but cause your suit to fill up like a water balloon if water gets in at the neck. Other cuffs trap dirt and wear away your skin. Because of this, and because lava can be tough on gear, a waterproof suit probably won't entirely replace your cheap clothing. But when you need it, you need it.

Here's a run-down of the caving suits used by your fellow grotto members, including information on availability. Of course, one of the most important questions can't be answered on paper, and that is fit. Fellow caver babes, note that most of these suits are sized for men – you're not going to get a glamorous, sexy fit.

## B&C Wunderwear

Material: Coated nylon

Features: Hood, pockets for knee pads, reinforced seat

Comments: “Some of my friends had problems getting their custom suits after they paid for them, and some of the accessory stuff (e.g. kneepads) I bought from B&C weren't sewn very well.” – VB

“These are cut for cavers with bent knee and elbows, pockets for foam pads in both knee and elbow areas and a reinforced seat. You can buy them off the rack or they will custom fit you at convention. (mine was off the rack).” – SS

Sizing: Custom

Availability: Sold at most major caving events; [www.bcwunderwearinc.com](http://www.bcwunderwearinc.com)

Price:

## Beaver Cordura

Material: Fleece undersuit and coated nylon oversuit

Features: Detachable hood; neoprene cuffs

Comments: “It is worthy of note that with both the under and over suit most guys can go for a pee without having to

completely take the top half off – but it is necessary to undo the harness “D” ring first. Anything that gets trapped between your skin and the neoprene cuff is there to stay – grit and mud tend to act like grinding paste on the skin.” – JC

Sizing:

Availability: British item

Price:

## Daleswear Kingsdale and Yordas

Material: Ballistic nylon; Yordas is slightly lighter

Features: Neoprene cuffs on the Kingsdale; elastic knit wrist cuffs on the Yordas

Comments: “Front zipper is very heavy duty and enclosed by Velcro. Inside breast pocket also closes with Velcro and is quite large.” – MF

“Just got this suit and so far it's my favorite. Heavier duty than the TSA and Meander, this suit holds up well for ramming through squeezes. Lots of people claim it's too stiff, that's because it is made of much thicker material. I didn't even get wet, at all, climbing up the waterfall in Papoose. It's also not as stiff as it was (I keep pretty good care of it). No rips so far and I usually rip a suit on the first trip.” – MM

Sizing: 12 sizes. However, if ordered from the Daleswear website, they will custom-fit to your measurements for an extra charge.

“Probably the best thing about these suits is the enormous sizing ranges they are made in. Being 6'3" they have a suit that almost fits me, which is leaps and bounds above any other suit maker that I've seen.” – MF

“Another strange fit; you have to experiment. Usually the caving vendors know how to size them.” – SL

Availability: IMO; [www.daleswear.co.uk](http://www.daleswear.co.uk)

Price: \$120 (Yordas) and \$130 (Kingsdale)

## Lost Creek Deluxe/Standard

Material: Coated nylon

Features: Double closure, seat and thigh reinforcement, hood in collar; Velcro tabs on wrists and cuffs, belt loops inside waist, reinforced elbows and knees, pockets for kneepads, straps behind knees to cinch kneepads tight. (Standard suit is available without hood, belt loops, tightening straps on the knees, and Velcro wrist closures, and with two fewer pockets.)

Comments: “A feature I particularly like is the integrated knee pad pockets. The knee pads pockets are long and wide, protecting a large area. I use a couple of layers of carpet padding and it works great. ... The unreinforced parts of the suit could be more abrasion resistant. I've had several small cuts in the suit repaired and I've had a reinforcing strip of material sewn over the side seams. That's roughly from

armpit to ankle. The seam was separating in places either because the stitching had pulled through the material or the stitching had been abraded from use in the cave. I haven't used the suit enough since the repairs to comment on how the seam modification is holding up." - AS  
Sizing: S-M-L-XL "They only come in three or four sizes, and none of them 'old fat guy' size." - VB  
Availability: IMO; Karst Sports  
Pricing: \$130 Deluxe/ \$130 Standard

### **Meander Criou**

Material: PVC  
Features: Formerly made by TSA. Velcro wrist tabs, double seat, hood, pockets for knee pads  
Comments: "It has a really wide Velcro closure in front and inside and outside chest pockets. The suit has proven to be quite durable, and it's pretty good at shedding water. If I had to replace it, I'd get another one just like it." - VB  
"I bought this right after TSA was purchased by Petzl. Hoping that it was equivalent to the famed Duck suit, I was sorely disappointed. This suit is completely, totally, and utterly crap. Anyone want mine? It shredded on my first cave trip (mind you it was a long trip into Bigfoot). They have indicated that the suit has improved from the original first run batch I received." - MM  
Sizing: 10 adult sizes  
Availability: IMO; [www.meander.sk](http://www.meander.sk)  
Price: \$115

### **MK3 Classic/Expedition**

Material: Coated nylon  
Features: Classic has double closure, elastic wrists/ankles, elastic foot loop, hood. (Expedition has only one chest pocket, no elastics around the cuffs, no elastic foot or thumb loops; and a zipper closure.)  
Comments: SS has an older one that has held up well.  
Sizing: 17 sizes  
Availability: Bob & Bob  
Price: \$120 Classic/ \$100 Expedition

### **Petzl Styx**

Material: PVC  
Features: Yellow only; hood. Reincarnation of "rubber duckie suit."  
Comments: "This is one of the ideal garments for cold wet and nasty caving. Nik has had it for over five years and it lived through the trip into Bigfoot that shredded the Meander suit. Completely waterproof. The only problem is the lack of double closure (i.e. front zipper and Velcro); it only has a Velcro closure." - MM

"Great at keeping you dry (you sweat inside though), and mud/water just sloughs off. Spendy but worth it. Usually a bit short in the crotch for guys." - SL  
Sizing: Six sizes  
Availability: IMO; Karst Sports  
Price: \$140

### **Petzl Sud**

Material: Coated nylon  
Features: Hood; double knees and butt. Formerly made by TSA.  
Comments: "Nice suit, lighter than the rest, reasonably waterproof. Easy to sew and repair. The price is unreasonable given the competition." - MM  
Sizing: Six sizes  
Availability: IMO; Karst Sports  
Price: \$179

### **Online store addresses**

Bob and Bob - [www.4bobandbob.com](http://www.4bobandbob.com)  
InterMountain Outfitters - [www.caves.org/imo](http://www.caves.org/imo)  
Karst Sports - [www.karstsports.com](http://www.karstsports.com)

Thanks to Van Bergen, Mike Fraley, Larry King, Scott Linn, Michael McCormack, Steve Sprague and Aaron Stavens for their input. ❖

## **CG member art show**

Hester Mallonee will be showing her paintings at Borders Books in Federal Way during the month of April.

"The caving tie-in is that there will be several cave works on display, new ones that I've finished since I last showed — several small-to-medium-sized ones and one or two larger works as well. Since it's April, there will also be tulip fields and other spring stuff, as well as various colorful things that don't really fit a category, but if it works I'll put it up there. So all in all, plenty to see if you are in the Seattle-Tacoma area in April and would like to come by," she said.

Borders Books is located at 1824 S. 320th, Federal Way, WA 98003 (halfway between Seattle and Tacoma), (253) 946-5877. They're across from Sea-Tac Mall, on the north side of 320th. They're in the same complex as Big 5 Sporting Goods and Linens 'N' Things.

Borders' hours are Sunday through Thursday, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. ❖

# Baker Lake scouting trip

By Steve Sprague

Date: April 6, 2003

Participants: Mike Fraley, Dave Hopf, Steve Sprague

This trip's genesis was Mark Sherman noting that the 1981 regional guide mentioned an unchecked limestone area south of Baker Lake in the vicinity of Silver Creek that "is most easily reached by crossing Baker Lake by boat." This piqued my interest, primarily because my boat could use a fresh water bath. I asked Mark, Dick Garnick, Dave and Mike if they wanted to check it out. Unfortunately Mark and Dick had other plans for this particular Sunday. Dave was a little skeptical of the project since he had been on the lake before and not seen any limestone, but he came anyway.

The plan was to assemble at the Cook Road exit, north of Mt.

Vernon at 10 a.m. This was the first day of Daylight Savings Time and we all had a little trouble arriving at the appointed hour, but we finally gathered and set out for Baker Lake. The wet weather staved clearing the closer we got to Baker Lake and we were greeted by sunlight wending its way through scattered cumulus clouds at the boat launch. We started motoring up the lake inspecting the occasional cliff faces showing through the old growth forest for signs of limestone.

The water level of the lake was about 20 feet below the high water mark. When Dave was on the lake last summer it was nearly full, so there was quite a bit of naked geology exposed for our viewing pleasure. This was territory that Dave didn't get to see before. At the point where the lake bends to the east we noticed the white flash of bedded limestone on shore and planned on inspecting it on our return trip. We continued motoring along the south shore, spotting the confluence of Silver Creek and then a couple more small outcrops. We continued around to the area where the north shore is steep and a road cut next to the

water exposes more rock. Danner indicates that there are deposits in this area also. Nothing of real significance was seen from the boat. The north shore can be accessed from the road so we didn't spend much time looking here. Back at Silver Creek, we tied the boat to a rock on shore and started to explore.



Dave Hopf and Mike Fraley on fractured limestone deposit, south shore of Baker Lake.

The shore here was scattered with a significant amount of limestone that had washed down the creek, an encouraging sign we thought. The USGS quadrangle map does not show the excellent trail along the south shore. I have another map that shows it starting from the road terminus at the upper end of the lake, then after crossing Silver Creek heading uphill roughly paralleling the creek. Our plan was to avoid bushwacking up hill by taking the trail,

doubling back to the creek when we had reached our target elevation of 1300 feet. Well, the trail stubbornly followed the lake shore and after making absolutely sure that no other trail branched up hill reasonably close to Silver Creek we resigned ourselves to bushwacking.

As we slogged up the hill one or two of the cumulus clouds passed overhead and we got a little damp. There was precious little sign of limestone on the hill side, except near the creek, where a couple of rocks looked like limestone float from somewhere above. The old growth forest here is magnificent and was worth the trip. Once we reached about 1300 feet we were running out of time, so from there we descended, sticking close to the west side of Silver Creek. There are a few very large cedars on that slope worth seeing, but the same can't be said for limestone outcrops!

Back at the boat we dried out a bit in the sun inspecting the alluvial limestone bits on the beach. On the way back to the launch we stopped at the bedded limestone. The deposit is heavily fractured, about 30 feet wide and runs roughly

southeast from below the water line of the lake into the forest. I got my camera while Mike and Dave inspected the upper extent. They said it petered out a short distance into the forest. The view was marvelous with Mount Baker on the left and up lake an intense, low arched rainbow was illuminated by the late afternoon sun.

Just before pulling the boat out of the water we spotted the largest limestone deposit of the day – Upper Baker Dam. (I wonder how many cubic feet of local limestone was quarried to construct it?) After the boat was out of the water we spent a few minutes inspecting the dam on foot. I am fascinated by these structures. On one side there is a placid lake and opposite is – nothing but air. There are even a few

## Meet your officers, from page 11

I'm married to a wonderful girl who loves to cave. I'm a certified Geek: I work at Microsoft as a Program Manager in Office. I live in Snohomish, and the grotto meeting is conveniently on the way home, which is why I manage to show up. We own two horses on five acres and have a vertical practice rope hung in our trees year round.

### Robert Mitchell, Vice Chairman

I guess I went into my first "wild cave" when I was 6 years old. (Of course, today I'd have trouble getting inside the drip line of it.) I was completely hooked by the time my parents took me on several commercial caves in Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee..

In 1986 I discovered the NSS and the Middle Mississippi Valley Grotto in St. Louis. Thrilled to find that there were "organized cavers" I jumped in with both feet.

Currently I'm a member of the NSS, MSS, MCKC, Willamette Valley Grotto and Cascade Grotto. I'm a former member of the Puget Sound Grotto.

I'm a American Red Cross Emergency Responder and SFA instructor. I have done vertical caving work. New job willing, I hope to get underground more and start attending meetings regularly.

### Aaron Stavens, Secretary-Treasurer

I started digging holes in my parents' back yard when I was in grade school. I really thought an underground room

spelothems about 100 feet down the face of the dam where water is seeping through.

Before heading home we debriefed over pizza in Sedro Woolley.

Conclusions: We covered the territory immediately west of Silver Creek from the lake shore to about 1300 foot elevation. The stream deposits and the float had to come from somewhere above where we traveled. That area is probably better accessed via the road system on the ridge above Silver Creek that has been developed since the 1981 regional guide was published. I would like to identify the source of that material. Another scouting trip is in order. ❖

would be way cool. I've been in organized caving since about 1997. In 1996 I met Scott Davis of the Puget Sound Grotto while doing a trip through Ape Cave. Up until that point I didn't know there were more than about three caves in Washington. I heard about Newton and knew I had to go. (As an aside, I was one of the tourists in Ape Cave with a Coleman lantern. Of course, during the trip, I dropped the lantern and damaged one of the mantles.)

Around a year later I contacted the Puget Sound Grotto and made my first journey to Cave Ridge for a trip into Cascade. I did a few outings here and there, but I was slow to get started. About the time I was really getting active, Jon McGinnis asked if I would take over as the interim Secretary-Treasurer of the Cascade Grotto. I accepted and was accepted, and here I am as the incumbent Secretary-Treasurer.

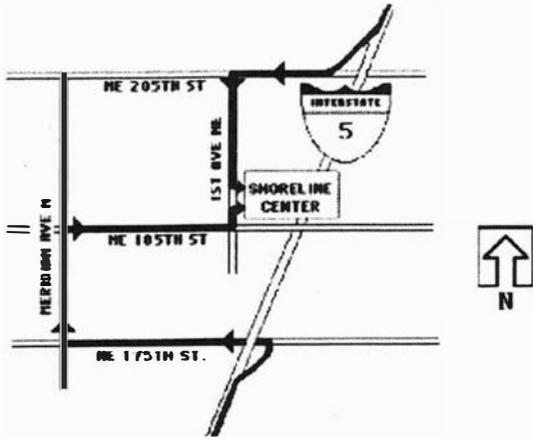
My interests in caving tend toward the technical aspects: vertical work, rescue, and alpine caves. I would really like to find some virgin passage and I think Cave Ridge has that potential. I like snow so I am all for some winter outings (not necessarily cave related). I enjoy very much seeing the grotto grow and being a part of that growth.

I am a software engineer by profession. I have no formal accounting training, but I can balance a check book. You can look to the *Cascade Caver* for samples of the meeting minutes and financial statements I have produced.

That's the caver me in a nutshell. If you'd like more info, buy me a few glasses of wine. That'll get me talking. ❖

# Meetings and Directions

The Cascade Grotto meets at 7 p.m. on the third Friday of each month at the Shoreline Community Center. The Community Center is located at 18560 1st Ave. NE in Shoreline. To get to the Community Center from Seattle, take Exit 176 on Interstate 5 (175th St. N) and turn left at the light at the bottom of the off ramp. At the next traffic light (Meridian Ave. N) turn right. Turn right at 18th St. N (the next light). Turn left of 1st NE, which again is the next light. Don't get confused with the Senior cCenter, which is on the end of the building. Enter the building on the southwest corner and find the Hamlin Room.



Please join us at our next meeting!

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Danny Miller  
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