



THE GREEN LAKE FOUNDATION

# THE GREEN LAKE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

“God save the foundation!” (Shakespeare)

Volume 4, Number 4

Green Lake Foundation

2019 Q4

## 2019: A Banner Year

January was named for the Roman pagan deity, Janus, the so-called “god of the doorways”. Janus had two faces—one looked forward to the new year and one looked backward to the year just completed. We celebrate our 2019 achievements by briefly recalling the progress made in that remarkable year. We hope that all Green Lakers share our pride and gratitude for what was accomplished.



### 1. Meridian House work completed

2019 was the year when work continued apace and by year’s end was finished on the newly-acquired Meridian House. The details of that work have been chronicled elsewhere, notably in the church service where the significant Mehrer family contributions in both work and financial support were acknowledged and honored.

### 2. Tenants in Meridian House

Another stellar accomplishment in 2019 was the successful tenancy of four young women into the Meridian House, in keeping with the vision of the house as a residence for SDA young women, especially those attending local universities and colleges. Already, the Green Lake Church has been blessed with their presence at our services and in our activities.

### 3. Church activities launched in Meridian House

A further achievement was the launch of active ministry in the facility. Many Friday evenings the women host a wonderful vegan dinner followed by Vespers. They have hosted Sabbath afternoon events, walks around Green Lake, an afternoon tea, and other opportunities for fellowship for our collegiate young people.

### 4. Meridian House basement named for Mehrers and dedicated to Housing Ministry

The basement of the Meridian House was built out to create two separate sleeping units and a compact kitchen,

which now become a new component in the Housing Ministry. Named the Don and Shirley Mehrer Guest Suite, it nicely complements the Mildred and Lyle Jensen Guest Suite, which has served so many families facing housing challenges during their visits to Seattle for special educational or medical needs.

### 5. Karin McLarty coordinates Green Lake’s Housing Ministry

The Foundation Board last October invited Karin McLarty to coordinate Green Lake’s Housing Ministry. This means she will match the real estate resources of the Jensen Guest Suite and the Mehrer Guest Suite with families and individuals facing critical needs for temporary Seattle housing due to their special circumstances.

### 6. Congregation members donate the \$250,000 match for the Meridian House purchase

A sixth achievement was announced with great enthusiasm by Pastor John McLarty at the January 4, 2020 church service—meeting the goal of raising the \$250,000 match for the challenge grant made at the end of 2018.

### 7. Foundation Sponsors Church Retreat

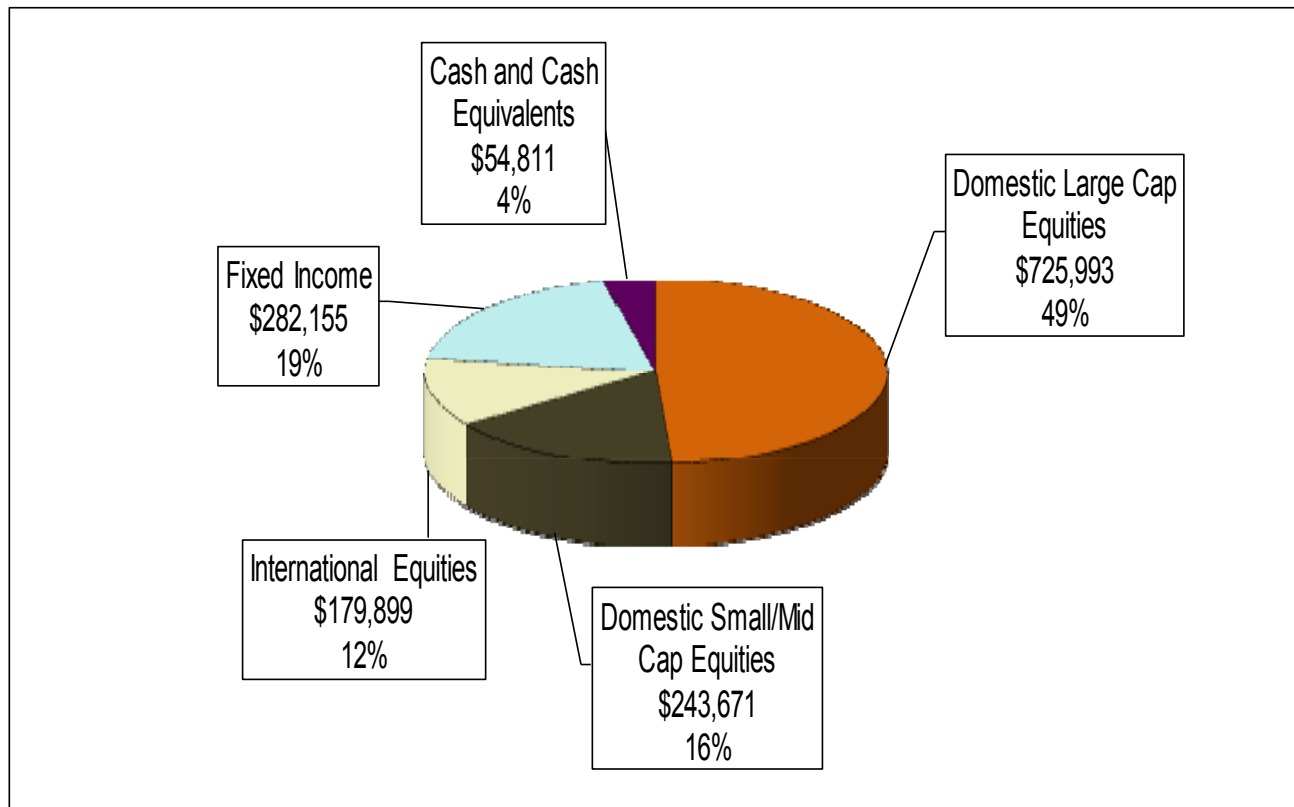
For yet another year, the Foundation sponsored the housing costs for the 2019 Church Retreat at Rosario. This has become a special and valued time for the Green Lake community to share beauty, fellowship, and inspiration together.

We could add an eighth item: the enhanced financial position of the Foundation as a combined result of generous contributions made in 2019 and the strong financial results achieved during the past year. We will indeed focus on providing the details of those financial results in our next issue of the Newsletter.

## Highlights of 2018

- ◆ Total assets of the Foundation: \$2.5M.
- ◆ Total financial assets under management - \$1.6M.
- ◆ Earnings on the Foundation's investments were a loss of \$101,136; -6.91%. In the prior year there was a gain of \$196,117; +17.87%. In the 6 months following, ending June 30, 2019, the return on investments was a gain of \$231,888; +15.6%.
- ◆ Purchased the Meridian House under seemingly miraculous circumstances on the same block as the Church for future ministry purposes.
- ◆ Accepted new gifts and deposits totaling \$830k for various endowments and funds, including over \$543k for the Meridian House.
- ◆ Green Lake House continues to serve as a rental property as well as a center for our Housing Ministry.
- ◆ The Green Lake Guest Suite was fully occupied or reserved for 22 weeks out of the year by guests who were in need of accommodations while in the Seattle area for medical and educational reasons.
- ◆ Communications Committee (Ken Walters, chair) published a quarterly newsletter throughout 2018.
- ◆ Sponsored the housing costs for the 2018 GLC retreat at Rosario.
- ◆ Distributed funds for elevator and Church budget purposes.
- ◆ Continued the GLF History Project. Have now captured the memories of almost all of the early GLC members.
- ◆ Began a scanning project to capture early Cypress School history in an electronic format.

## Investment Allocation



# A CONVERSATION WITH MERLE AND LARENE MITTLEIDER

*On October 1, 2016, Alvin Kwiram interviewed Merle and LaRene Mittleider. Edited for length and clarity.*

## **It is always fascinating to explore our members' genealogical background. Merle, where did your great-grandparents come from?**

MM: My father's grandparents, the Mittleiders, were Germans from Ukraine. In 1899, they caught a ship in northern Germany to come to the U.S. My grandfather, Christian Mittleider, was only three years of age.

## **Where did they settle?**

MM: In Streeter, a German community in North Dakota.

## **How about your grandmother's family, the Wolf family?**

They came in 1910. My paternal grandmother, Mary (nee Wolf), was 12. Her father had died in Ukraine, and her mother had remarried.

## **And your grandmother married four years later, in 1914?**

MM: Yes, she was young, age 16. They had the opportunity to get a homestead in Blackfoot, Idaho. My grandfather Mittleider, with his mom and brother, had three adjacent sections in Blackfoot. The opportunity to get a homestead motivated the transition from North Dakota to Idaho.

## **In 1920 or 1921, they moved to Twin Falls, Idaho. Were they Adventists at this point?**

MM: In Blackfoot, there had been evangelistic services where my grandparents were introduced to Adventism.

## **Eventually they moved from Twin Falls to the Boise area?**

MM: Yes, they had gone to Gem State Academy for camp meeting. Someone there urged them to move to Eagle, Idaho, near Boise, where someone wanted to get a church school going. The family had four boys and two girls at the time. In 1927, they moved to the Boise area.

## **Your mother's family, the Goodmans, were not Adventists at that time either.**

MM: That is correct. My Goodman grandparents lived Christian lives, but were not involved with any church. The Goodmans had immigrated years before from England, first to Nebraska and then to Canada, where they had a wheat farm. Grandfather John Goodman had dual citizenship, in the US and Canada. About 1910, he had returned to the U.S., to the Missoula, Montana, area where he farmed. My Goodman grandparents met after he moved to Montana.

## **How did the Goodmans become Adventists?**

MM: My grandfather was worried about the high school being too rough. A lady in the community supplied my mom's family with church magazines, *Our Little Friend* and other Adventist children's magazines. Through her, they learned about Gem State Academy. My mother's older sisters and an older brother went to Gem State first, and eventually my mom and her younger brother both attended. It was financially difficult, but somehow they managed.

## **LaRene, your family name was Dorr. Apparently, they lived in the state of Washington for some time.**

LM: Yes, they did. We don't know how long. My Dorr grandparents met in the Port Angeles area where they lived.

## **Were your Dorr grandparents Adventists?**

LM: Not until after my Dad, Buford Dorr, was born, which was in 1914. All we know is that at some point there was a conversion, perhaps at an evangelistic meeting, but I don't know for sure.

## **Your mother's family?**

LM: My mother was LaVerne Palmer and on the maternal side were the Nelsons, or originally Nielsens, who had emigrated from Denmark. My grandmother Mabel was born in 1888 in Kettle Falls, Washington, and she married Arthur Palmer in Seattle. My great-grandfather Nelson was a mason and had a company that did the masonry work on the Olympic Hotel. He also built the Adventist church in south Seattle for his wife, who was an Adventist.

## **What circumstances led to your showing up at Green Lake at some point?**

LM: My mother was attending Rainier Valley church, as was my Dad's family. That's where my parents met. My grandmother, Mabel Palmer, first brought me to Green Lake in the early 1950s, perhaps 1952-1954, somewhere in there. My grandparents moved to the north end of Seattle to be closer to my family, and it was difficult to continue at Rainier Valley since we had to take three buses. I attended Jane Addams Middle School in north Seattle for my seventh-grade year. My parents weren't happy with the school, so the following year they transferred me to Seattle Junior Academy for my eighth-grade year. My dad had attended SJA way back when. By the end of my eighth-grade year, I was baptized, and I attended SJA through the ninth grade. Then I attended the brand new high school I could walk to, Ingraham High, for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. But I had friends at Auburn Academy, and my parents let me go to Auburn for my junior and senior years, so I graduated from Auburn. But we had attended Green Lake Church before that.

## **What was Green Lake like for you in the 1950s?**

LM: My first recollection of Sabbath School at Green Lake was the "youth chapel". There were a lot of kids there. Mrs. (Pat) Young was the teacher. She used to interview the young people at Sabbath School, and I would pray that she wouldn't pick on me! I was bashful. You never knew who she was going to call up to interview.

## **Who were your friends at Seattle Junior Academy and at Green Lake?**

LM: Audrey Ching and Judy Young were friends in my class. Hattie Wood, Karen Fasano, and Marcia McAdoo were one year ahead of me. And Anne Jensen. I rode to school with the Jensens.

## **You lived close to the Jensen family?**

LM: Yes, a few blocks from the Jensen house.

## **Where did you and Merle meet?**

LM: At Auburn Academy, not in school but at camp meeting, 1959. I started as a Junior in September 1960, graduating in 1962. We started dating the summer of 1960, right after he had graduated and just before I enrolled at Auburn.

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## A Conversation with Merle and LaRene Mittleider, *continued*

### Where were you married?

LM: Right here at Green Lake Church.

### And there was some conflict over where your reception could be held?

LM: There was a little skirmish about whether we could hold our reception in the basement since the Ingathering group, led by Dr. Ching, had reserved the basement room so they could meet after ingathering for hot chocolate and to count the money. But there was a conflict with the date for our reception, and the church changed its mind to accommodate us. The post-Ingathering hot chocolate went to a different room. Incidentally, Dr. Ching loved Ingathering.

### There is a rumor that Merle came all the way from Germany to marry you. Is that correct?

MM: I was in the military service and after my dental tech training I was sent to Germany. But I got leave to come home to get married. But there was one little problem that came along unexpectedly, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. For a little while we didn't know if I was going to make it. I came home hoping that I could take her back over to Germany, but it takes a little more than hope.

### So between Ingathering and the Cuban Missile Crisis, you almost didn't make it.

MM and LM: [Laughter]. Right!

### You have been an integral part of this church for decades, sometimes quietly or almost invisibly. But always helping and supportive. What do you appreciate about Green Lake?

MM: I've really been blessed by my associations here. The Sabbath School classes were really good. Lyle Jensen really had an impact on me, particularly his discussions on science and the Bible. Ron Fasano had a Sabbath School class where he delved into the historical context of the Bible—when it was written, the culture at that time, and the fact that God gave man impressions and those impressions were put down in the words of that period's culture. Each of us needs to put all these together to really understand what the Bible says to us individually.

### You also found Pastor Rudy Torres to be insightful.

MM: Yes, Rudy Torres taught me that the Bible was not about proving doctrines and historical facts. It was for teaching attitudes.

### And you find Pastor John McLarty's sermons to be inspirational.

MM: Yes, John McLarty tell us the most important thing is how you treat your fellow man. That really rings with me.

### And other members have stimulated your understanding?

MM: I remember when Ben McAdoo said, "How am I supposed to know everything now? When we get to heaven, with better minds and time to study through eternity, that will teach us more. I don't have to know everything now." That helped me.

### LaRene, you came into this with only a partial background in Adventism. Did this congregation provide a training ground, if you will?

MM: Yes, everything was kind of new to me. I wasn't sure what I was supposed to do always or not supposed to do. The

Jensens added a lot; they helped me. When I rode to SJA with them every day for two years, I learned a lot. Mildred was such a wonderful person who helped the younger people and the young mothers.

And Genevieve Johnson, I kind of count her as a spiritual mother. I've done a lot of Bible studies with her. So there are people here who really helped me in my walk and influenced me, and friends that we have enjoyed through the years.

### We must mention one amazing coincidence: The Mittleider girls' marriages at Green Lake – starting with yours, LaRene, and then that of your daughters, Lori and Julie—have an amazing correlation with Green Lake's pipe organs.

Yes. Merle and I were married here with the first pipe organ. Lori was married with the second pipe organ. And Julie was the first one with the brand-new [third] organ.

### Too bad you didn't have more daughters. We'd have another new organ. [Laughter]

LM: When we look at the early photos, sometimes we wonder, "Is this the same church?" Except for the stained glass windows, it isn't exactly the same. We have made so many improvements and additions.

### What do you appreciate most about your time at Green Lake?

LM: Friends, and the overall quality of the congregation. The thing I've appreciated is the effort to agree to disagree and to learn from each other, with respect. The diversity that we have, and the ability to get along.

MM: At times I've wondered, "Is this really what I want to do?" Then I always realized that I do gain from my association here. And I feel like I've grown in the process.

### LaRene, your mother is still alive?

LM: Yes, at age 100. And nowadays she watches the Green Lake church services by Internet.

**It's been another fascinating story about remarkable life trajectories. We have many members who go about their business quietly, don't make any fuss or muss, but are an integral part of the congregation. You've been involved in so many different activities over the years—teaching in every division in the Sabbath School, serving on numerous committees, deaconing, helping with reception, and on and on. Thank you. [Applause]**

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