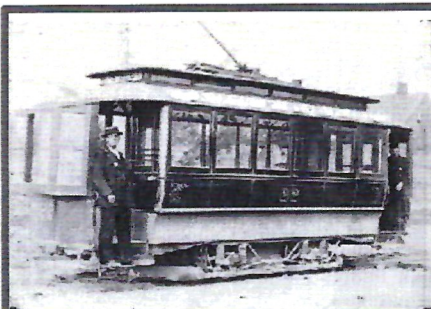




NORTH K STREET LINE - WSHS 1895 Image

Trolley Times

North Slope Historic District Inc. August 2026

YOUR HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD

Volume 119

Tacoma Tree Foundation to Present at August 27 Neighborhood Meeting

Lowell Wyse of the Tacoma Tree Foundation will be our presenter at the August 27 North Slope Historic District quarterly meeting.

We're fortunate here in the North Slope, and North Tacoma generally, to have a good tree canopy. Other neighborhoods in the city are not so fortunate. In addition, redevelopment pressure in our older neighborhoods is threatening the tree canopy that we do have. Come and hear about why our tree canopy is so important and what the Tacoma Tree Foundation is doing to protect and enhance our tree canopy, and how you can support its efforts.

Thursday, August 27
Immanuel Presbyterian Church
901 N J St. Enter on N 9th St.

Join us on **Thursday August 27th** at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 901 North J Street Street. Doors open at 6:30pm with dessert and coffee; program starts at 7pm.

Save The Dates 2026

August 4-- National Night Out

August 27-- General Meeting; Tacoma Tree Foundation program

November 19-- Holiday Party

Order Your North Slope Historic District Plaque

[illegible]

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# Former North Slope Resident Was Instrumental in Ending the Military's Ban on Gay Servicemembers

By Marshall McClintock

Tacoma held its Pride Festival in July to celebrate its LGBTQ+ community. It is an opportunity for us to remember one of Tacoma's gay rights heroes and North Slope resident, Perry Watkins (1948 – 1996).

Perry moved to Tacoma with his family in 1960 and attended Gault Middle and Lincoln High Schools, where he was open about his sexual orientation. Drafted in 1967, he indicated that he was gay on his enlistment form, but the Army doctor listed him as fit to serve. At his 1968 induction exam in Tacoma, he again stated he was gay, and again a military doctor listed him as fit to serve. Perry re-enlisted twice, each time openly acknowledging his homosexuality, and built an excellent service record. While serving in Germany, he even performed in drag at military-sponsored shows, leading to engagements at military bases across Europe. The Army investigated him in 1975 but decided that his service record warranted his retention.

After serving in Korea and Italy, he was stationed in Tacoma. About this time, he bought the bungalow at 916 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street in what would become the North Slope Historic District. After 14 years of service, however, the Army moved to discharge him in 1981 due to his sexuality. What followed was a nine-year legal battle that forced him into bankruptcy and cost him his North Slope home. In 1982, federal District Court Judge Barbara J. Rothstein ruled that the Army couldn't use Perry's own statements against him after repeatedly allowing him to serve. The Army appealed, and a Ninth Circuit panel reversed Judge Rothstein's ruling, holding that the lower court couldn't require the Army to violate its regulations unless the court found that those regulations were invalid. After the Army discharged him in 1984, Perry worked in the Tacoma office of the Social Security Administration.

With the help of the ACLU, Perry kept fighting his discharge. In 1988, another Ninth Circuit three-judge panel ruled that excluding homosexuals from the military was unconstitutional, the first time a federal court had done so. The Army appealed to the full Ninth Circuit. The court avoided the constitutional issue and basically reinstated the District Court's ruling in Perry's favor. While this left in place the Army's ban on homosexuals serving, it reinstated Perry's back pay and retirement benefits with a retroactive promotion to Sergeant First Class. The Bush Administration appealed the decision, but the Supreme Court declined to review, leaving the lower court decision in place.

Perry didn't overturn military policy single-handedly, but he was a role model for standing against an unfair system. Congress finally ended the exclusion ban in 2010, which President Obama signed into law. Perry continued to be active in gay rights, especially regarding the military. He died at 48 from AIDS-related complications at his later home in Tacoma on March 13, 1996.

# How The North Slope Historic District Began

by Julie Turner (*originally printed Feb. 14, 2002*)

Unique for sure! The North Slope Historic District, 950 structures, is ONE of only two RESIDENTIAL Historic Districts in the City of Tacoma, and this district is probably the largest in the State of Washington. It was the creation of an unofficial neighborhood group called North Slope Neighborhood Coalition. This group of committed residents began its quest as a way to combat a destructive zoning category, but a love affair with the history of the homes soon took over. The passion to protect the historic character of the neighborhood grew to be fierce and tenacious.

In the summer of 1993, North J. Street residents were casting about for a way to save their street from further demolitions of old, run-down homes, and they stumbled on the Historic Preservation Office and the officer, Valerie Sivinski. At a home meeting in November, 1993, Valerie laid out the task ahead – survey all the residents and property owners on the street to see if a majority wanted an historic district. If the answer was “yes”, then she’d write an ordinance, with the residents’ input.

So, Roger Johnson and Julie Turner began the two-year journey. They went door-to-door and by phone with as many residents as possible, explaining, answering questions, and passing out written information. The goal was to build a consensus on “saving the street from the city’s zoning” by putting an historic district overlay on top of the multi-unit zoning category. A modest goal of six blocks was chosen but had to be expanded at the request of residents on adjoining blocks to a total of nearly 100 structures. The “yes” count came in at about 75% and Ms. Sivinski began the ordinance-writing phase.

A group of residents met with Valerie and discussed what was desirable to have in the ordinance. The preservation office incorporated the residents’ desires, but some ideas were rejected by the city attorney. After another rewrite, Valerie was ready for public hearings!

Hearings! The word was intimidating to the residents, but they went first before the Landmarks Preservation Commission – a friendly body! – and then before the Planning Commission. Each time, several people had objections, but the residents prevailed by overwhelming numbers.

Along the way, Tacoma City Councilman Robert Evans became an effective advisor, and it was he who said, “Numbers count; bring lots of people to the hearings.” His advice worked, and on August 1, 1995 the North Slope Historic District was born when the City Council approved the ordinance. The old homes on North J could now exist in peace.

*(We’ll follow this up with articles on how the district was expanded and the zoning changed. Stay tuned!)*

## **Welcome to Our New Beautification Committee Chair!**

Abby Huff has graciously volunteered to be a board member and our new beautification committee chair. Following in the footsteps left by previous chairs Geoff Corso and Tom Giske, Abby will coordinate with our volunteers who maintain the traffic circles and will be setting up a couple of neighborhood cleanups each year. Thanks, Abby!

#####

## **What is “NOAH” and How Does It Relate To Historic Neighborhoods?**

“NOAH” is an acronym for Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing. This can include single family homes, duplexes/triplexes, and multifamily housing. Generally, it refers to housing stock, generally older, that is more affordable than the regional housing market without being government-subsidized.

The cost of maintaining and even renovating existing housing is nearly always less costly than new construction. Unfortunately, it is older neighborhoods, where much of this naturally occurring affordable housing is located, that are under the most pressure for demolition and redevelopment. Newer neighborhoods in more suburban areas, including some neighborhoods in West Tacoma and Northeast Tacoma as well as outside the city, typically have covenants attached to the property titles that prohibit any use other than single family development. Older neighborhoods, including those in the north end, south Tacoma, east Tacoma, and central Tacoma, do not have covenants; their development predates the time period when the federal government started requiring the use of covenants. These neighborhoods are where most of the older and more affordable housing is located. While Tacoma’s comprehensive land use plan supports maintaining existing housing stock and addresses the problems associated with displacement when older more affordable housing is replaced with newer construction, it does not address the importance of preserving NOAH.

Without a specific city program or policy to protect older affordable housing from demolition and redevelopment, the only tool currently available is designation as a city historic district, which is a labor-intensive effort and not necessarily appropriate for all older neighborhoods. Historic district designation also brings with it the preservation standards that justify demolition protection, but some of those standards may add to the cost of upgrading older buildings.

*("NOAH" continued)*

Some cities are taking steps to preserve older more affordable housing, such as including policies in their comprehensive land use plans for providing financial assistance for very low- and low-income households for maintenance and repair of older homes. Another approach being considered is protecting the availability of naturally occurring affordable housing using long-term affordability covenants.

A house or building that is considered naturally occurring affordable housing may not be likely to qualify for individual listing as a historic structure. And some of the naturally occurring affordable housing doesn't date from the historic period that a historic district recognizes and will not be considered a contributing structure. Think of apartment buildings built in the 1970s that may not have been updated recently. Local governments need to be creative about how to preserve this housing and protect neighborhoods from demolition and the ultimate displacement of residents. One possible approach might be to use the historic district designation as a model, but instead of a historic overlay create an "affordability overlay" that similarly limits demolition of viable and affordable housing.

To read more about NOAH, see "Protecting Your Community's 'Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing'" by Steve Butler, published by Municipal Services and Resource Center (MSRC) September 18, 2024 (<https://mrsc.org/stay-informed/mrsc-insight/september/naturally-occurring-affordable-housing>).

\*\*\*\*\*

## Summertime Grape Lemonade

Fill the refrigerator tray with grape juice and let it freeze solid.

Make a tart Lemonade and pour over the grape flavored ice cubes.

Garnish with a sprig of spearmint, and serve.

Loganberry or raspberry juice may also be frozen in the refrigerator trays

And added to any fruit drink. The fruit-juice cubes are delicious because

They add flavor and richness instead of diluting the beverage

*From*

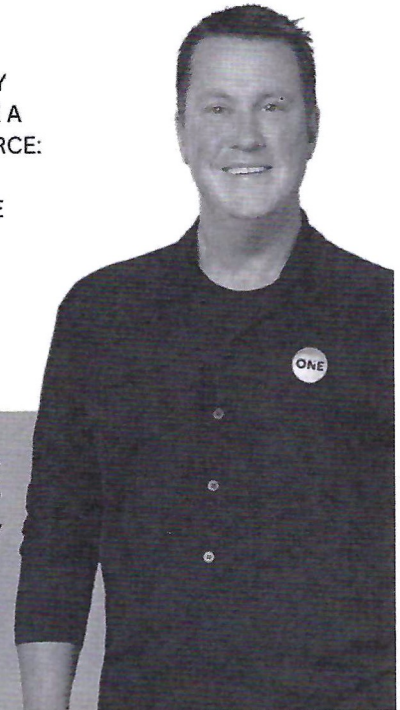
*My Better Homes and Gardens Cook Book*

1930

REALTYONEGROUP  
TURN KEY

# HELLO NORTH END NEIGHBORS!

I'M CRAIG TUTTLE, BROKER ~ RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL EXPERT AT REALTY ONE GROUP TURN KEY. I'M A BORN AND RAISED TACOMAN, PASSIONATE ABOUT ALL THINGS LOCAL. FOR OVER 20 YEARS, TEAM TUTTLE, HAS HELPED BUYERS AND SELLERS ACROSS THE TACOMA, SPECIALIZING IN HISTORIC HOMES IN THE NORTH END. MY DECADES OF SUCCESS SERVING THE NORTH SLOPE HAVE GIVEN ME A PERSPECTIVE THAT IS UNBEATABLE. I'M YOUR REAL ESTATE RESOURCE: I KNOW THIS NEIGHBORHOOD AS ONLY A LOCAL CAN. THE UNIQUE, CHARMING AND DIVERSE PROPERTIES OF THE NORTH END REQUIRE AN IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORY OF THE HOMES & OF THE CITY. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR HOME. OR ARE BEEN CONSIDERING LISTING YOUR PROPERTY, TEAM TUTTLE IS HERE TO HELP! REACH OUT ANYTIME, FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS.



**CRAIG TUTTLE: TEAM TUTTLE**  
BROKER - REALTY ONE GROUP TURN KEY  
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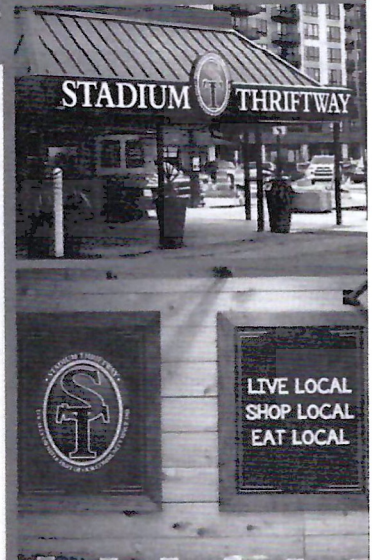
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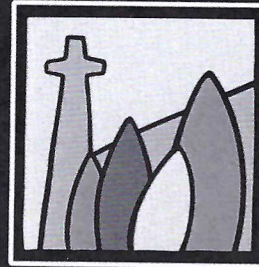
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*Come as You Are*  
Authentic Kindness. Thoughtful Curiosity.  
Compassionate Justice. Sacred Beauty.  
*Leave with Love*

**Sunday Worship: 10:30am**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Friday Organ Concert:**  
**12:10pm**

*We are disciples of Jesus, seeking to practice loving,  
liberating, and life-giving community in relationship  
with God, each other, and creation.*



**CHRIST**  
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*a Community of Tacoma*

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