

Summer 2017

Vol. 42, No. 2

Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden

Inside this issue:

Update on Weyerhaeuser Campus	2
Internship between the RSF and the Bremen <i>Rhododendronpark</i>	3
The Art of Botanical Illustration: A Q&A with Margaret Trent	4-5
Spring Event Recap	6
Evening in the Garden	7
RSBG Calendar	7
New Members	8
Thank You!	9

Rhododendron
Species Botanical
GARDEN

P.O. Box 3798
Federal Way, WA 98063

Office: 253-838-4646
Fax: 253-838-4686
Info@RhodyGarden.org

Executive Director's Report

Steve Hootman, Executive Director & Curator

After two and half years as our very capable gardener, I am sorry to have to report that Ben Meersman will be leaving us at the end of June to return to school in pursuit of an advanced degree. Ben has been an outstanding gardener and a fantastic co-worker, and we have made great strides in the garden during his time here. From the very beginning of his employment here Ben understood what we were trying to accomplish and how he could best fit in and support all of our efforts. He was always willing to step right in and do whatever was necessary at the time – whether in the garden, the nursery or even the office. We wish him the best of luck with his new career path.

In early March we welcomed our new intern – Isabella Yeager who comes to us from New York via Montana. Isabella served as our weekend retail intern in the Visitor Center plant sales area all spring and is now full time in the garden and nursery assisting the collections staff in every aspect of management and propagation of a living plant collection.

Due to the seemingly never-ending cold and rainy weather we have endured here in the Puget Sound region throughout virtually the entire spring, our attendance numbers are quite a bit lower than what we have experienced in past years. Although May was a bit better than earlier in the season and we made up some lost ground in terms of paid admissions and thus plant sales it is still turning out to be a very down year so far. Of course the cold and rain were very good for the growth of the plants and we are noting some amazing growth and massive leaves on many of the Rhododendron species in the garden. Even the ferns and native plants seem especially tall and lush this year.

After all of the excitement and work of putting together a “spring season” in a botanical garden, including our annual symposium, the spring plant sale, etc. etc. it is somewhat of a relief to now be well into summer and once again focused upon the garden, propagation and preparing for next spring! The life of a rhody farmer.

Update on Weyerhaeuser Campus

Ian Walker, Vice President, RSF

Since the beginning of the year there has been quite a bit of activity and publicity about the recent sale of the Weyerhaeuser Campus to the Los Angeles-based Industrial Realty Group. As the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden occupies a small corner of this Federal Way-landmark many questions have arisen from our members about what is happening and what this means. Luckily, a local grassroots group called Save Weyerhaeuser Campus has provided a convenient way to keep up with what is happening through its website www.saveweyerhaeusercampus.org.

Save Weyerhaeuser Campus has been very active in promoting the conservation of this site, as well as making presentations to the Federal Way City Council, the King County Council and other groups. Most recently the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation highlighted the Campus as one of its 2017 Most Endangered Places.

Save Weyerhaeuser Campus has also involved Forterra, Washington's largest land conservation, stewardship and community building organization to assist with strategic planning and fundraising. Thus far the RSF Executive Committee has had an exploratory meeting with Forterra to assess options to preserve our site. While it is still early in the planning process, one of the main points discussed was that our efforts will be most successful if we collaborate with the two other groups affected by this buyout, Save Weyerhaeuser Campus and our neighbor, Pacific Bonsai Museum.

This collaboration is already underway, however, the situation is moving slowly as we continue to gather information to determine the best course of action. From all indications, we do not anticipate much happening until next year, but we are encouraged by the progress made to date. Updates will be forthcoming.

Now offering...

RSBG Referral Program

As a thank you to supporters like you, the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden is introducing a new Referral Program.

Whenever you introduce someone you know to the Garden and they join as a member, *you* receive \$20 off of a membership or membership renewal.

All you have to do is make sure the referee mentions your name when signing up as a member. It's easy!

For more information, contact our Visitor Center at 253-838-4646 x 140

Internship between the Rhododendron Species Foundation and the Bremen *Rhododendronpark*

Martin Monthofer is a gardener at the Bremen Rhododendronpark in Germany in charge of propagating species Rhododendron, hybrids, hardy azaleas, Vireyas, trees and shrubs. He also takes care of the Garden's Borneo and New Guinea greenhouses and provides guided tours to visitors. This June, Martin spent two weeks at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden shadowing our Nursery and Propagation Manager, Dennis Bottemiller, as well as working with our Executive Director/Curator, Steve Hootman. Below is a recap by Martin about his time at the Garden and how he sees it fitting into his work at Bremen Rhododendronpark.

Hi, I am Martin Monthofer from Bremen, Germany. I'm staying here for a two-week internship. My field of action at Bremen Rhododendronpark is to propagate and cultivate the *Rhododendron* Section *Vireya*, hardy and non-hardy *elepidote* and *lepidote Rhododendron* species, plus trees and shrubs from seed and cuttings. We use sowing, cutting and grafting methods to propagate rhododendrons. I'm doing this internship because we have been having some problems with cultivation and especially problems propagating some difficult *Rhododendron* species. I want to reduce the number of plants that are lost or poor looking

It is interesting for me to see how rhododendrons are cultivated and propagated here in the Garden! The most fascinating thing for me is to see species *Rhododendron* growing outside in the Garden. At Bremen we have to cultivate in greenhouse conditions, because our winters are too cold. I am especially interested in the cultivation and propagation of big-leafed species and the *Taliensia* Section. The North American deciduous azaleas also keeps my interest because they are hard to propagate and establish. During my stay, I am being educated by Dennis Bottemiller and Steve Hootman, who give me so much information and help me a lot to understand and learn more about the cultivation and propagation of species *Rhododendron*. It is great to exchange experiences, knowledge and technical interests. It is also very helpful to see how species rhododendrons are cultivated under the climate conditions you have here in Federal Way, WA and to see under which conditions and requirements the plants grow. Com-

bining them with trees, shrubs, perennials, ferns and bulbs and corms makes this internship very fascinating for me.

Also, Steve Hootman's teaching about the big-leafed rhododendrons—especially where they come from in nature—was very helpful because I am not a taxonomist. I'm a propagator, but seeing the difference between them and getting to know something about their natural habitat helps me to understand them. It is great to see parts of Washington State, like Seattle, Tacoma, Federal Way, other gardens and the mountains and learn something about your daily business, culture and so on. That turns this internship into a fantastic, great and perfect stay. Thank you very much for giving me this chance to do that.



Martin Monthofer next to *R. dalhousiae* var. *rhabdotum* in the Rutherford Conservatory

The Art of Botanical Illustration: A Q&A with Margaret Trent

Isabella Yeager, Intern

Botanical illustration has its origins in the Roman Empire, when knowledge of herbal treatments and interest in pharmacology grew as trade and communication routes expanded across languages and dialects. Botanical illustration predated taxonomy, and played a key role in mitigating health risks associated with the misidentification of plants used medicinally. Quality and level of detail in botanical illustration improved alongside 18th-century printing technology as a rising interest in botanical tourism, amateur botanizing, plant collecting, and horticulture led to increased demand for field guides, which to this day remain consistent in their colorful plates and beautiful illustration.

As a medium, botanical illustration links the arts and sciences, bridging ground between horticulture, botany, history, and fine art. It is informed by a deep understanding of taxonomy and morphology, not to mention a sense of place in a long tradition of such work, and takes many years of training to master. Though modern photography has surpassed illustration as a primary form of visual documentation, botanical and zoological illustration have historically played a key role in preserving records of both extant and vanishing species. These media tend to offer a more nuanced view of the species in question, featuring detailed renderings of nodes, seed capsules, root structure, and other attributes that would have been difficult if not impossible for the non-scientific community to observe before access to magnification tools was widely available.

Margaret Trent is a botanical illustrator who is working with the RSF to produce pieces that will appear on items for sale in our Visitor Center. She has studied under a number of respected botanical illustrators, and is a member of the Pacific Northwest Botanical Artists and the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators. Her work was also recently displayed at the Elisabeth C. Miller Library at the UW Center for Urban Horticulture. Below are excerpts from a recent interview with Margaret about her process and sources of inspiration by our intern, Isabella Yeager.

Isabella Yeager: What are the stages of capturing an image of the plant and translating this image (photo) into an illustration?

Margaret Trent: The first thing for me is to look at the plant. [I look] to see if the plant has a story — is it stately, a little loose, sexy... that will help form a final image. A lot of botanical artists will only work from live plants — that can be really hard to do because they change as you're sitting there. I work primarily from photographs. I have over 100 each of blue poppies, of *R. molle*, and of *Agapetes* [from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden]. Everything has to be in proportion, so I take a lot of measurements as well. Digital photography has been a great plus because you can take hundreds of photos, expand them and see tiny details, and as long as you have a good camera you'll get good color.



One of the many photos Margaret Trent is using as source material for her drawing of *Meconopsis* (blue poppies).

The other thing I do is to pick up some fresh petals and bring them home, to compare to the colors of my palette. I never use just one color — usually two to get the color that I want, because that's visually more interesting for people. I use colored pencils, which is a bit unusual, but I like the results that I've had with them. Then I do lots of drawings on tracing paper and shift them around until I find a composition that I like. Once I've got all the little pieces in place then I start to do the test colors and techniques, and then the final drawing, which begins

as an outline in pencil and then is filled out with color. I like to make sure I've got the colors as close to right as I can get them before I start because there's nothing worse than starting on your final drawing and realizing it's not quite right, and you have to start again. So you want to avoid that.



Margaret's preliminary sketches for the *Meconopsis* illustration she is working on for the RSBG.

IY: I know you were pleased that the *Meconopsis* were at a stage where you could see both the bud and the open flower when you were at the Garden. Do you ever try to represent multiple seasons or stages of a plant?

MT: Yes you can, and a botanical illustrator would do so for a book or museum. I've got three buds: one quite tightly closed, sort of half out and half in its shell; two that are beginning to uncurl, which have such a rich deep color as well, a much deeper blue with purples in them; one that's more fully open, the kind of perfect poppy, and then some others that are looser, aging a little bit. So that gives you a feel for the poppies at different stages.

IY: To what degree does a consideration of morphology in the case of flora, or the musculoskeletal system in the case of fauna, play a role in your artistic process?

MT: It depends on how much of the plant you end up illustrating. A botanical illustration for scientific use would want to show every part of

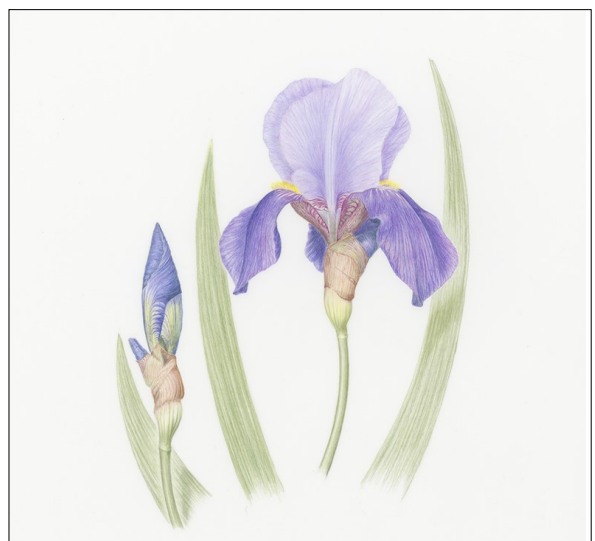
the plant from the roots up, but even with work intended for an artistic purpose, I still want someone to be able to look at the picture and say oh, that's a Himalayan Blue Poppy.

IY: What artists, gardens, or works are sources of inspiration to you?

MT: There are probably two people who have influenced my work quite a bit — in terms of teaching, Kathleen McKeehan, also a local botanical artist, was the person who got me drawing and initially painting again. Another — and she actually started as a botanical artist — was Beatrix Potter. She did a lot of natural paintings of fungi and insects and then moved into drawing of mice and things — for me it's like a spiritual experience going to her house in the Lake District; I've been three times. Her original paintings are just exquisite; beyond what you see on the printed page. I also used to love to wander the natural history museum in Edinburgh. I loved what I'd call the stuffed animals.

IY: Did your father's work as an archaeological illustrator contribute to your desire to enter this line of work?

MT: He was actually a very good plant illustrator, interestingly enough, but I think what he gave me was a patience and an attention to detail that made me the way I am.



"Bearded Iris" by Margaret Trent

Spring Events Recap

Amanda Glazer, Program and Outreach Manager

It's been a busy spring at the Rhody Garden, and despite the inclement weather and less-than-record-breaking attendance, our spring events went off without a hitch.

On April 7th over 100 *Rhododendron* enthusiasts came together from near and far for the Second Annual Rhododendron Species Symposium in Federal Way, WA. In addition to garden tours, field laboratory courses and social gatherings with fellow RSF members and friends, attendees enjoyed enlightening presentations from Valerie Soza, Research Scientist at the University of Washington and Dr. Hartwig Schepker, Scientific Director of the Botanic Garden and Rhododendron-Park Bremen in Germany.

The following weekend 28 vendors from nurseries across the Puget Sound area gathered in the West Parking Lot of the Weyerhaeuser Campus for our annual Spring Plant Sale. KC Deez Barbeque was on site serving delicious southern cooking, and our "Rare Plant Raffle" sent a few lucky attendees home with some exceptional flora.

The weather was not on our side on Mother's Day Weekend, however, but a lovely time was had by all who came out with family and friends. Filipino Cuisine from CheBogz Food Truck made for the perfect picnic food to share on the Rutherford Conservatory Terrace, and

thanks to a late peak bloom period this year, the Garden was bursting with colorful rhodies to admire.

Our final event for the spring was Blue Poppy Day – Art in Bloom, a collaborative effort between the RSBG, Pacific Bonsai Museum, and the Federal Way Arts Commission. As a thank you to the local community we chose to waive

admission for the first time this year, and as a result, saw record-breaking attendance.

Over 600 people stopped by the Garden in a mere 6 hours to peruse the handicrafts of local artisans and listen to the musical stylings of the Federal Way Youth Symphony, Jet

Cities Chorus, and Bad News Botanists. The day would not have been complete without a stunning display of blue poppies, and once again the Blue Poppy Meadow and Blue Poppy Glade did not disappoint.

As we now enter into July with only two major events left for the year, the RSBG staff can step back for a moment and take pride in all we accomplished this season...at least until planning for next year begins, that is.



Visitors watch as Jet Cities Chorus performs on the Rutherford Conservatory Terrace on Blue Poppy Day.

Evening in the Garden

Evening in the Garden is held annually to celebrate our wonderful members and volunteers, who are the very heart of our organization. This year our theme is *Tapas on the Terrace*, and we hope you can join us for this special, Spanish-inspired event.

In addition to a delicious array of small plates and appetizers members and their guests can enjoy wine, beer, and a Trader Joe’s sponsored non-alcoholic beverage bar. Garden tours with our knowledgeable horticulture staff will be offered prior to dinner, and both a silent and a live rare plant auction will take place after.

This event is not open to the general public; non-members must be guests of members or staff. You can register online through our website (www.rhodygarden.org), over the phone at 253-838-4646, or by returning the registration form on the back of this publication. Registration closes July 14th. We hope to see you there!



Please Join Us for
Evening in the Garden

July 29, 2017
 5:00 - 8:30 PM
Tapas on the Terrace
 Wine and Tapas
 Garden Tours
 Rare Plant Auctions
 Members \$35/Non-members \$40
 Reserve your spot by July 14th
 Online at Rhodygarden.org
 or 253-838-4646

RSBG CALENDAR 2017

Third Thursday’s in the Garden

Free for the general public
Monthly through September
4-7pm

Evening in the Garden *“Tapas on the Terrace”*

Members and their guests
only
Sat. July 29th, 5-8:30pm

Foliage Festival & Plant Sale

October 21-28, 2017, 10
am - 4 pm

Opening Day Sale Sat. 21st
Fall for Maples - Sun. 22nd
Monday Open - Mon. 23rd
Fall For Ferns - Fri. 27th

Welcome New Members (9/1/2016 to 1/31/16)

Peggy Agress	Shiyu Gao	Liticia Mann	Rob & Terry Shovlowsky
Catherine Allan	Aaron & Jaime Gilbert	Anna Jane Marlar	Gurpreet Singh
Ruth Marie & Jared Ballance	Kim Greenheck	Will & Maria Mason	Lynn Sires
Bob & Erin Banasik	Joy Guinivere	Tony & Norma McCammon	Gail Sklar
Brian Bedsworth	Damon Gulick	Jackie McDowell	Lois Smith
Jane & Albert Bender	Suzannah Gusukuma	Jesika McEvoy	Valerie Soza
Robin Bentley	Julia Guzman	Lisa McPeak	Craig & Sue Spencer
Jacelyn Boschok	Suzi Hammond	Roxanne Merket	Eric Stegner
Brandon Brewer	Julie Ann Harris	Penny Merriman	Nicole Steinert
Judine Brooks	Ryan Heflen	Daniel & Sheila Miranda	Kam Stewart
Verna Buhler	William Heller	Kevin & Karen Moan	Virginia Stockton
Ronald & Barbara Burch	Susan Hernday	Jim Newport	Gabriele Storck
Charlene Burley	Alfredo & Neva Herrera	Erik & Karen Nilsen	Jan Stravers
Marilyn Cadavid	Cody Hinchuff	Elizabeth Odsen	Richard Street
Catherine Cameron	Sarah Hinckley	Gabriel Ortega	Sally Sullivan-Hall
Sharolyn Canady	Angela Hockley	Courtney Ostrem	Beverly Swanson
Alex Candalla	Donald Howe	Jean Parietti	Katie Swickard
Valerie & Gregory Carnese	Hsiangwen Hu	Michelle Perkins	Nicholas Sykes
Joe & Shannon Castro	Chad Inks	Rita Perry	Louis & Aimee Szabo
Henning Christensen	Young Min Jeon	Bill & Deborah Phare	Jasmine Tejeda
Jae Doo Chung	Hui Jin	Donna Pierson	Raoul Titus
Megan Cooper	Steve Johnson	Debra Prinzing	Honorio Todino
Mary Crofts	Raymond Kato	Patricia Pugnetti	Lawrus Traas
Becky Crowell	Jeff & Mary Keller	Sally Raftery	Ken Tuami
Susan Curtis	Marilyn & Bob Kellogg	Beth Ramage	James Tucker
Charles Davidshofer	Margie Kinoshita	Eve Rickenbaker	Kim Veilleux
Evenstar Deane	Heather Kohl	Gyne Riser	Curt Webb
Mary DeNoyer	Alice Krause	Rob Rotermund	Kathleen Williams
Jean Donati	Young Kwon	Nicola & Bobby Rubalcaba	Kelly Wilson
Christopher Dreyfus	Vickie & Barry Lafreriere	Omar Rubi	Angela Wingrove
Neeley Durkee	Amanda Landry	John Rush	William Winslow
Erin Dwyer	Josh & Cameron Larios	Ruslana Sabbagh	Sherrie Workman
Chris Fallacara	Catharine LaRiviere	Sam Sacharoff	John Wott
Mike Farndale	Owen & Jessica Leiser	Donya Saunders	Karen Wylie
Anthony Felix	Steven Linden	Lois Schley	Hong Xu
C W Ferguson	Victoria Lord	Mary Schneider	Linda Zarpakar
Heather Floyd	Alicen Lum	Robert Seddon	Xiadi Zhang
Friends of Abkhazi Garden	Jeanne Lunde	Eric Shalit	
Ron Gagliardo	Rich Lupfer	Andrew Sherman	

Contributions - Thank You! (1/1/17 to 5/31/2016)

Curator travel	Susan B. Clark	Camille Paulsen
Walker Foundation	Deanna Daneri	Rosalie Preble
	Jean Feagin	Steven Randolph
Intern Program	Mollie Groendyke	Michael Rusch
ARS Eureka Chapter	Kenneth W Gross	Michelle Scheff
ARS Seattle (SRS)	Anne Gross	Donald Selcer
WSNLA	Henry R Helm	Stephanie Shadbolt
	Freelon Hunter	Chuck Sheaffer
Seed/Pollen Program	David Husch	Donald Smart
ARS Seed Exchange	Kurt Laidlaw	Jeanine Smith
	Mary Lignana	Margret Soderstrom
	Katherine Lintault	Cathy Spiker
2017 Yearbook	Ramona Machulak	Edith Tenneson
Walker Foundation	Sara Mauritz	Suzanne Walker
	Nina McNamara	Bruce and Jennifer Willham
GiveBIG	Microsoft Alumni Network	Cynthia Lowe Wolfe
Winnifred Adams	Lare Mischo	John A Wott
Daniel Adams	Mona Moloney	
Peter Adams	Charles Muller	General Donation
Paul Anderson	Niko Okamoto	Walker Foundation
Marcia Caretti	Suzanne Olsen	
Richard Cavender	John W. Parker	
Anne Clark		

The Rhododendron Legacy Circle

The Rhododendron Legacy Circle is open to new members who have made provisions for the Rhododendron Species Foundation in their financial or estate plans. Established in 2013, the Legacy Circle enables the RSF to recognize and show appreciation for our friends' generosity during their lifetime.

Legacy gifts are an impactful and vital means to ensure the RSF's future success. There are many creative ways to provide a contribution to the RSF while enhancing and safeguarding one's own financial situation. Planned giving helps maximize the tax benefits of charitable giving, allowing people to provide a gift they may not have thought possible.

For more information and to access an enrollment form, go to: <http://rhodygarden.org/cms/get-involved/planned-giving/> or contact Grace@RhodyGarden.org.

RSF Board of Directors

Executive Committee

President: Sean Rafferty
 1st Vice President: Ian Walker
 2nd Vice President: Joshua Green, III
 Treasurer: Bob Gust
 Secretary: Garth Wedemire
 Members at Large:
 Anne Gross
 Jean Muir
 Chip Muller
 Immediate Past President:
 Mike Stewart

Board of Directors

Rollo Adams
 Chris Brickell
 Al Campbell
 David Chamberlain
 Charles Sale & Margaret Charlton
 Ken Cox
 Susan Davies
 Harold Greer
 Benjamin D. Hall
 Henry R. Helm
 Don Hyatt
 Donald E. King

Douglas Justice
 William Lindeman
 Bob Mast
 Peter Norris
 Garratt Richardson
 Martha Robbins
 Hartwig Schepker
 Elaine Sedlack
 Don Smart
 Paul Thompson
 Diane Thompson
 Tim Walsh
 Keith White

Board of Directors (Honorary)

Peter Cox
 Honore Hacanson
 Patricia McDowell
 June Sinclair
 Herbert Spady, M.D.
 Philippe de Spoelberch
 George Weyerhaeuser

Please let us know if you have made Rhododendron Species Foundation part of your estate planning.

We want to say thank you!

RHODODENDRON SPECIES BOTANICAL GARDEN

The RSBG Newsletter is published in spring, summer and fall by the Rhododendron Species Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Submissions are due by the first of the month, 8 weeks before publication.

Email submissions to newsletter editor amanda@rhodygarden.org.

RhodyGarden.org

PO Box 3798
Federal Way, WA 98063
2525 S. 336th Street
Federal Way, WA 98003

253-838-4646

Garden Hours

Tuesday through Sunday
10am - 4pm

RSBG Staff

Steve Hootman

Executive Director & Curator
steve@rhodygarden.org

Grace Pham

Asst. Director & Accountant
grace@rhodygarden.org

Dennis Bottemiller

Nursery Manager & Propagator
dennis@rhodygarden.org

Atsuko Gibson

Assistant Curator
atsuko@rhodygarden.org

Amanda Glazer

Program & Outreach Manager
amanda@rhodygarden.org

Pat Whempner

Visitor Center Manager
patw@rhodygarden.org

Chanelle Mikel

Office Asst. & Visitor Center
Attendant
chanelle@rhodygarden.org

Isabella Yeager

Intern
intern@rhodygarden.org

EVENING IN THE GARDEN

SATURDAY, JULY 29TH

REGISTRATION FORM

NOTE: Admission can NOT be sold at the door - Reservations must be made!

Reserve # _____ ticket(s) at \$35 each member Sub-Total \$ _____

Member's Names: _____

Reserve # _____ ticket(s) at \$40 each non-member guest Sub-Total \$ _____

Guest's Names: _____

Vegetarian meal(s)? _____ Grand Total: \$ _____

Method of Payment: _____ Cash _____ Check (US Funds) _____ Visa _____ MasterCard

Account Number: _____

Exp. Date: _____ V Number: _____ (3 digits over signature on back of card)

Signature: _____

Please return : Scan and email to: Info@RhodyGarden.org or Fax: 253-838-4686 or Mail to: PO Box 3798, Federal Way, WA 98063