

## Tale of Horror: Kitsap Judge Orders Tree Topping

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#### **Man With Pruning Shears**

*By Phyllis McGinley*

The gentleman loves all that grows-  
    Bud, shoot, or bough that blossoms dapple.  
He plants the rose and feeds the rose  
    And guards the springtime apple;

Has a green thumb; is quick to praise  
    The frailest petal in his borders;  
Can heal (with a myriad sprays)  
    The peony's disorders.

So what has overtaken him,  
    What frenzy set his wits to wander  
That he should ravage limb by limb  
    The wholesome lilac yonder?

That he should lay the privet low  
    And do the vines such treason  
That scarce a twig, I think, will show  
    Its leaf again this season?

A milder chap was never planned,  
    Or one with more decorum  
But now the weapon's in his hand  
    And branches thick before'm

The self-same madness takes his mind  
    That took his mind when he was little  
And owned a knife and could not find  
    Sufficient stick to whittle.



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*continued from page 1*

Mandating tree topping should be disallowed solely on the grounds that it creates a hidden liability for future tree owners. (In the Barcia case, the property owner was sued for maintaining the previously topped tree that caused a young boy to fall when a weak branch gave way as he was climbing the tree. He is now a paraplegic.)



*Kitsap trees at risk – see cut line*

Furthermore, cutting someone else's trees benefits no one but the owner of the home and window with the view. It increases their property value, while decreasing the value of their neighbor's treed property without compensation. The tree owners, on the other hand, are maintaining a public "green utility" from which we all benefit. Trees are not just for looks. As Don Wilike said, "We'd need trees if they were ugly and smelled bad."

People still don't seem to get that these trees, right here, in your backyard, city or greenbelt, are the ones that are doing the most to stop global warming, save energy, create oxygen, sink carbon, and prevent storm water overflow, slides, smog, and particulate pollution. Trees provide a host of other benefits that are not just nice, but increasingly essential. Just like you can't pollute the air or water that is on your land, as it is used by everyone, you should not be

*continued on page 13*