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LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

DECEMBER, 1987

NOVEMBER GIVERS AND INCOME

Our quarterly payment of \$2917.55 on the 140 acre addition to Dishman Hills Natural Area was made on time December 15. Total contributions for November were \$912.18 and interest income on reserve funds was \$99.70. Expenses came to \$195.78 (printing of bulletin and office expense).

Our thanks to the following who have donated money, recyclables and/or services in November and have given permission for publishing their names: Linda Armacost, Kathryn Bernard, Margaret Cada, Vera Carpenter, Carl V. Erickson, Helen Ferguson, Stanley A. Fahlgren, John Gardner, Phyllis Hambrook, Della B. Hodge, Mary Holz, Lynn M. John, Evelyn Knierim, Gloria J. Krebs, Bill Marchand, Mike Meekin, G.U. Osborne, Francis/June Potter, Ambrose Priestley, Thomas H. Rogers Sr., Thomas H. Rogers Jr., Dennis L. Sanders, Hazel L. Smith, Marie U. Stanley, Larry Thiemann, Mary Ann Wilharm and Jeanne H. Wilson. (We may have unintentionally omitted some donors or recyclables. If so, we apologize. Also, please let us know if you have donated money and are not listed above.) The balance we owe on the land is steadily decreasing, thanks to you. Please keep donations coming.

Four boys from John Rogers High School, Chad Bangs, Don Bridges, Steve Caine and Kevin Maher did a great job of maintaining trails in the nature preserve in early December. They are members of Peggy Burt's and Mary Porter's biology classes. These teachers recently received the top state and national designations of Conservation Teachers of the Year, something of which Rogers High School, Spokane and Washington can be very proud of. We add our congratulations to these two superb teachers for their accomplishments.

Walk in the Wild Zoo in the Spokane Valley invites the public to its Winter Solstice Festival January 2 and 3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The program includes the grand opening for the bobcat exhibit, Smokey the Bear, Woodsy the Owl, a talk by Jim Rieck on the Washington Wildlife Department's backyard wildlife program, an ice sculpturing contest and hayrides. For more information call board member Marilyn Omlor at 924-7221.

We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving some of the natural areas of the Spokane area for people to enjoy and learn from. Larry Thiemann, President; Thomas H. Rogers, Vice-President and bulletin editor; Helen E. Lininger, Secretary; David E. Lentos, Treasurer.

We offer slide programs on the Dishman Hills and other outdoor subjects, and guide service on hikes in the Hills. No charge for these, but we welcome contributions. Call us at 926-7949 for arrangements. Our monthly meetings starting in October will be at Riverview Terrace Retirement Center, E. 1801 Upriver Drive at 7:30 p.m. the third Monday.

Please make checks payable to Dishman Hills Natural Area Association and mail to The Treasurer, P.O. Box 14141, Spokane, WA 99214-0141. Many thanks!

ENJOY THE SNOW--VISIT THE HILLS

Our winter snow that endures was right on time, December 15, about the usual date. If you are not a skier and don't enjoy driving in the white stuff, try a hike in the woods. Here you can see what the wild residents have been up to.

Thus far the Dishman Hills seem not to have been visited by coyotes or deer but smaller mammals are about as usual. The most common are the red squirrels. (Why are they called that? They certainly are not red.) They scold you from above and leave their tracks as they bound from tree to tree. Piles of cone scales heaped on rocks or logs show where their favorite dining spots are. Pines cones are scarce in the Hills this winter so it may be a lean one for them.

Here and there are tiny dimples in the snow. In groups of four little footprints, connected by the fine line of a dragging tail, they tell of deer mice on their way the night before. A mystery yet to be solved is sets of tracks, in twos, larger than squirrel or weasel tracks. A visit in the night with a strong flashlight might spot the maker of these.

Winter bird censuses in the Hills have so far found very few birds. An occasional raven courses above the trees, looking for a dead animal to scavenge. A few red-breasted nuthatches and black-capped chickadees search the trees for their food. One ruffed grouse is residing in the census area. Surprising was a white-breasted nuthatch, always rather scarce in the Hills. Even more surprising was a varied thrush, that robin-like bird with a black necklace and splashes of orange in its plumage.

Little "snow bugs", those tiny wingless insects of the scorpion fly family, are found on the snow as usual, rather inactive as the temperature drops below freezing. Also quite immobile are several kinds of little spiders that apparently have fallen from the trees. A little assassin bug and a brown lacewing fly were found on the snow on one visit to the Hills. A first for the winter Hills were broken wings of a California tortoiseshell butterfly, indicating that it had been hibernating there--until a hungry bird found its hiding place. In recent years these butterflies have become fairly common in the Dishman Hills-Tower Mountain area, where their larvae feed upon deer brush (Ceanthus).

Please use this form when sending contributions
(Contributions are income tax deductible)

Account No.

\$ _____ Land purchase fund

\$ _____ Memorial for _____

\$ _____ Annual Dues (\$10) New? ___ Renewal? ___

\$ _____ Student or Living Lightly (\$5)

\$ _____ To cover bulletin expense (\$2)

_____ Check here if you do NOT want your name listed as a donor.