

LIGHTS and SHADOWS

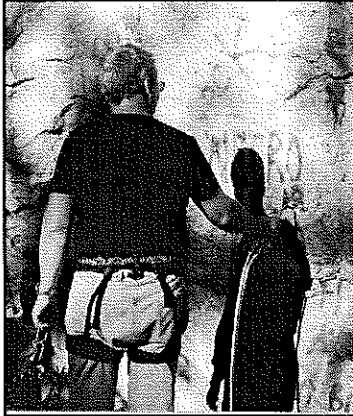
from the
Dishman Hills

October 2004

ROCK STARS

What do wings, rock star, rock 106, klingon, spook, and chicken spread all have in common? These are climbing routes in Dishman Hill's famous (locally) climbing canyon, Deep Ravine. This challenging vertical cliff has provided three generations of climbers a city-close recreational site. The spot is between Appleway and the northeast side of the Natural Area, but is just outside the Natural Area. The ravine follows the trace of an old fault that cuts through the tough granite and gneiss rock of the ridge. The fractured bedrock was excavated by glacial floods during the Ice Age leaving a deep canyon with vertical walls.

A group of climbers, called the Dishman Hills Resource Group, has formed to tackle the cleanup and maintenance of the site. In the last several years the deterioration of the canyon has accelerated as more and more people seek recreational climbing sites and the number of sites are reduced. In 1990 the canyon had 18 climbing routes and only 60-70 rock bolts attached to the cliff. Rock bolts are installed in the rock to provide a belay anchor for safety, but are kept to a minimum since they do damage the rocks and are unsightly. By 2000 there were 27 climbing routes and about 100 bolts installed, and by this year there were 37 climbing routes and 300 bolts installed. The canyon floor was littered with trash and the rock walls painted with both graffiti and climbing instructions. Enough was enough, and a group of involved outdoor recreationists formed, and they gathered this month from as far as Seattle to clean up the canyon. They removed 2240 pounds of trash, two cars, numerous rock bolts, removed paint with blowtorches and filled holes drilled in the rock for handholds. They raked up the area and placed cement barriers on the access to the canyon to prevent future dumping. The Group and the Association met with the Hutchinson Irrigation District people, the land owners, to discuss ways to protect the canyon from the type of abuse it has received in the last several years.



The Dishman Association salutes the Resource Group for doing hard work to support their recreational site. They are a shining example of what the community will need to do in the future to maintain the quality of life we all enjoy in the Spokane area. If you are an outdoor recreational type person you must support and be responsible for the sites you use or they will go away, and faster than you think. To use an old Smokey the Bear phrase "If not You, Who!"

MOVING FORWARD

Community groups have been supporting Dishman projects for many years. Much of what we have been able to accomplish would have been impossible without donations from Spokane Valley Kiwanis and Sunrise Kiwanis, the Spokane Mountaineers, Audubon, Hobnailers, Scouts, Rotary Club of Spokane Valley, numerous garden clubs, Native Plant Society, Northwest Foundation,

What makes it so hard to organize the environment sensibly is that everything we touch is hooked up to everything

Isaac Asimov

several private foundations, Spokane Area Retired Educators, Spokane Floral Society, and the Spokane Mushroom Club. We feel very fortunate to be recognized as a valued member of the conservation movement in Spokane. We plan to move forward in effectively transforming your generous support into success in saving our Natural Heritage and keeping Spokane green as the city grows in the future.

Along these lines we are pleased to announce our successful purchase of the Lemon property on the southeast side of the Dishman Hills Natural Area. The property is 21 beautiful acres of undeveloped forest and meadow with a seasonal creek and a spring. There is high quality animal habitat and it's situated along the animal migration route between the Dishman Hills and the Rocks of Sharon NA to the south. This was a bargain sale and the seller met us more than halfway with a \$30K price for a parcel that was appraised at \$70K. The seller, Frieda Lemon and her family, wanted to give something valuable back to the community that had been their home. Thank you 40K times over! This new purchase will serve as protection on the southeast side of the natural area from development that is at this very moment cutting up the natural space on the Dishman Ridge for a new housing development. We were only minutes in front of the bulldozers in closing this purchase. In addition, we hope that this new land holding will support another community conservation group called the Dream Trail group. This consortium of recreation and conservation organizations is working hard to provide a trail connection between the Dishman Hills and the Rocks of Sharon natural areas before development makes this impossible.

ORGANIZATION NEWS

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have any questions. We meet every other month on the third Tuesday at Opportunity Elementary School, S. 1109 Wilbur, in the teacher's lounge, 7pm. The next meeting will be November 16th.

September was a very quiet month for donations. We figure that most are very engaged in this year's important elections. The following are our September donors that have consented to be listed: Jeff & Brenda Danner, Frieda Froth, and Jan & Edward Reynolds. Thanks you all.

Please use this form when sending **CONTRIBUTIONS** or **DUES**

All contributions are tax deductible.

Send contributions to: DHNAA

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