

LIGHTS and SHADOWS

from the
Dishman Hills

July 2007

MEMORY LANE

The Association recently received a letter and a phone call from senior octogenarian, Bill Eagle, who spent some time in the Hills as a kid in the late 1920's. Bill now lives in Sequim, Washington, but is still a member of the Association and wanted to share some memories of his boyhood adventures in the Hills. He started out by reminding us that 80 years ago all the roads in Spokane Valley were gravel and there were few trails in the woods. There were no soccer or football fields, but empty lots were where kids played baseball. Bill then stated "we had the best of them all, we had the Dishman Hills and how we enjoyed them." Bill and his gang of merry men roamed the Hills in search of adventure and fun. Their favorite area was around the ponds now called East and West ponds. Bill is old enough to remember the original name for the ponds, Horse Soup ponds. One can only imagine how this named came to be! They found most of the trees too small for proper tree forts, so had to settle for lean-tos and ground forts. Once Bill and his buddy Rich built a little raft for a aquatic adventure on one of the ponds. The craft would barely hold two, and when his buddy's old dog Rex decided to swim out and climb aboard, it tipped over and Bill discovered to his surprise, that the water was over his head. They also caught "water dogs" in the ponds that they used for bait to catch bass at Newman Lake and perch at Shelly Lake.

Bill remembers sitting in his yard on North Locust Lane at night and watching a large wildfire that burned through the Hills in the late 1920's. It must have been a impressive sight for a boy and Bill said that it seem "to cover the whole mountain." He observed that the fire burned mostly grass and bushes and didn't seem to do much damage to the trees. As a kid roaming through the Hills he doesn't remember ever seeing any stumps suggesting there was never any logging in the area. He also doesn't remember seeing many people, nor for that manner much wildlife other than gophers, woodchucks, and lots of garter snakes. The hobo village on the northeast side of the Natural Area next to the railroad tracks was off limits for the kids since it was the location of "scary types" but the stone quarry on the east side of the Natural Area wasn't and it was active making tombstones.

Other memories include the wonderful display of flowers in the spring and the dry summers when a kid had to be very careful not to start a wildfire. There was a special spot where kids could light a fire and roast hotdogs, weiner rock, a overhang ledge in Deep Ravine on the northeast side of the Natural Area. This special spot was a family picnic area and the Campfire girls had their meetings there. Thanks for the memories Bill. The Dishman Hills continues today to provide memories and adventures for all those who wish to find them, they are there for the taking.

YOUTH CAMP

The DHNA was the site this month of an outdoor educational workshop for students from Lakeside Middle School. Washington State Univ. and Spokane Co. Conservation District ran a summer youth camp program that included forestry, wildlife habitat, and the management aspects of an urban forest. The two days of workshops started with forestry, with an introduction to tree species, tree diseases, and ways of measuring and managing the resources of the

In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous.

Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC)

woods. Some incremental boring of tree growth rings was demonstrated.

Wildlife habitat was the second day. Kids were divided into teams and tasked to wander out into the Natural Area to find habitats and habitat limits for assigned species that included white-tailed deer, coyote, black-capped chickadee, ruffed grouse, and song sparrow. Their reports of found habitat included suggested means to improve the habitat for their species. Other topics included habitat management, covering forest succession, ecology carrying capacity, wildlife limiting factors, importance of water and ground cover, structural diversity, organic debris, and forest fragmentation or the "edge effect". These topics are very important to us in the Association. We applaud these educational efforts since we realize how important it is for the younger generation, the folks that will be taking over (if we like it or not), to have the skills to continue the conservation of our natural spaces and all the things that live in them.

ASSOCIATION 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 questions. We meet every other month on the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm, at Opportunity Elementary School, S. 1109 Wilbur. Our next meeting will not be until September 18th since we will be taking the traditional summer break.

The following are our June donors that have consented to be listed: Chris Bachman, Brad Blegen, Brenda & Bob Bray, Nancy Cashon, David Deline, Judy Heggem-Davis, Bill Fix, Celesta Frost, Mary Gardner, Michael & Claudia Hamilton, Eris Heggem, Inge & Harry Hendron, Patty Houff, Inland Northwest Community Foundation, Steven King, Jeff Lambert, Esther Lancaster, Rich Leon, Della Meyer, Margaret Millsap, Marlene Montgomery, Marion Pillsbury, Diane Rogers, JoAnn Rounseville, Ann Sheridan, Ruth Slichter, Cynthia Stevenson, Betty Stratton, Patricia Sweeney, Lawrence Thieman, Elnore Thompson, Babetta Velategui, Mike & Jody Wende, and three anonymous donors. Thank you for your generous support!

Nature is just enough; but men and women must comprehend and accept her suggestions.

Antoinette Blackwell (1825-1921)

Please use this form when sending **CONTRIBUTIONS** or **DUES**
All contributions are tax deductible.

Send contributions to: DHNAA
3415 S. Lincoln Dr.
Spokane, WA 99203

Your Name: _____
Please put your account no. on your check (see on address)

\$ _____ Memorial for: _____
\$ _____ Land Purchase Fund
\$ _____ Annual dues, due by June 30 (\$10)
\$ _____ TOTAL

New ? Renewal ? Don't list me as donor

Please tell us if this newsletter is unwanted or if there is an address mistake