

# LIGHTS and SHADOWS

from the  
**Dishman Hills**

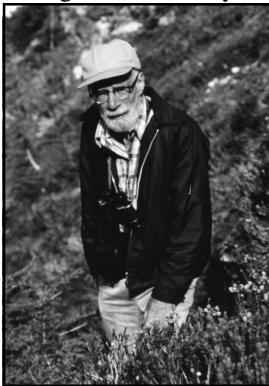
June 2012

## WHO IS T.R.?

New natural land acquisitions this spring by the Dishman Hill Conservancy (DHC) and Spokane Co. has resulted in a stand-alone block of conservation and open space lands for which we would like to recognize with a new name. Since our contribution to make this happen was \$258,313.81, Spokane County has invited us to propose a name and our Board has forwarded our choice to them, the Tom Rogers Conservation Area. While many of you did know Tom, many others have not, and the following is a summary of why we think the choice is a good one.

Tom Rogers was there to lead the first hike into the Hills of conservation supporters in that cool spring day in 1966. Teaching biology at University High School, he had already conducted many hikes in the Hills with students. The spring hike started the ball rolling and soon after, the Association was formed with Tom as the first President. An excerpt from a letter from Tom, dated 1968, states well his reasons moving ahead to save the Hills: "At first I took the area for granted but it soon became apparent that it would eventually be developed for housing. After trying for several summers to plant the north-sloping fill of Valley Mission Park with native trees, shrubs, grasses, and flowers, I realized how very difficult is the restoration of a despoiled area and decided to set my sights a bit higher and work to save our natural areas close to town where people live. At first the idea of acquiring the Dishman Hills to protect them looked like a hopeless job but soon it was apparent that other people saw the value of saving them."

Tom was an active member of Audubon, and the Washington Native Plant societies as well as the Nature Conservancy, from which came the funds for our first land purchase in 1968. For the next three decades Tom was a leader in land acquisition and conservation projects, education programs, and he worked tirelessly with government agencies to assure that urban growth included the saving of our nature spaces. He felt that the Association should be a "grass roots" organization supported by donations and volunteers from all parts of our community. He wanted the people to be connected to the Dishman Hills in a real way. He had a faith that support would appear for the varying projects over the years. Tom organized bake sales, a recycling



Tom in his element

program, car washes, event displays, public hikes, and numerous donation campaigns. A letter from Helen Lininger, long time DHC member, described Tom as "impressive in his tenacity, determination, and commitment to the project, and his singleness of purpose-- all who knew him will remember him in their own way. For the most part he will have added something positive to each life he touched." When things went wrong Tom got tough, and County Commissioners know what they were in for when he got up to testify on issues concerning the Dishman Hills. But at heart, Tom was a biologist, a teacher, and a naturalist, rather than an activist. His biologist of the Natural Area, and of Tower Mountain are truly impressive, listing scientifically all the plant, insect, and animal species to document the biodiversity. His listing of endangered and threatened species was instrumental in bringing Washington State into the Natural Area as a land owner. He was a bird watcher and loved butterflies.

In short, Tom Rogers embodies what conservation in our Spokane community is all about, the saving of a precious asset for all to experience, to learn from and to be inspired by the marvelous wonders of nature. Thus it seems entirely appropriate to leave for future generations a reminder of T.R. in the name of the new conservation area.

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have questions. Our board meets every month on the third Tuesday. Our next meeting will be on July, 17th, 7 pm. We meet at the Moran Prairie Spokane County Library, 6004 South Regal St. Visitors are always welcomed.

The following are our May donors that have consented to be listed: Joyce Alonso, Andrew Ashmore, Lynn Bahrych, John Beecher, Debra Brinker, Jonathan Carson, Claire Carter, Nancy Cashon, Diane Casey, Josh Davis, Suzy Dix, David Duba, Janice Gillingham, Michael & Claudia Hamilton, Eris Heggen, Kathryn Henderson, Harry Hendron, Suzi Hokanson, Carolyn Holmes, Judith Hudson, Kathy Kalich, Gina Kettleson, Rita Kinney, Chris Kopczynski, David Kral, Rich Landers, Nancy Ledeboer, Rich Leon, Lee Louds, Pat Manners, Ted & Ann McGregor, Tim McHerry, Leo Middendorf, L.R. Montgomery, Norma Myers, Steve Nisco, Joe Neimiec, Elizabeth Parsons, William Peterson, Loyd Phillips, Robin Redman, Ruth Roberts, Bruce Rosenoff, Scott Schell, Marianne Shields, Mitch Silver, Cindy Smith, Susan Strong, Steve Trefts, Babetta Velategui, Mary Weathers, Karl & Kristine Wolbach, Brian's Woodturning, Hershel Zellman, and one anonymous donor. Thanks for making last month one of the biggest donation months in the Conservancy's history!!

## *YES, I want to help protect our natural areas in the Spokane Region*

Enclosed is my tax-deductable donation of :

\$ 15\*    \$ 25    \$ 50    \$ 100    Other \_\_\_\_\_ \* annual dues, due by June 30

Gift is a Memorial for: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Acc. No. (see address) \_\_\_\_\_  Please don't list me as a donor

**Please return this form along with your check payable to DHNAA**

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