

LIGHTS and SHADOWS

from the
Dishman Hills

September 2013

TEACHING TEACHERS

Last month the Conservancy hosted a workshop for elementary schoolteachers at Camp Caro on the north side of the Natural Area. This was our first run at creating a program to introduce the area's teachers to the Dishman Hills as a valuable resource for environmental education. The program was right in line with our mission to connect people with nature using conservation, education, and recreation. It has been a dream of ours since the beginning of the conservancy in the 1960's to, someday, build an environmental education center for the Spokane Community. It would be great if all school kids have the opportunity to see and fully experience one of Spokane's greatest assets, it's natural settings. We quite are aware that community support is anchored in understanding and appreciating the mission of our Conservancy.

During the day 40 teachers rotated to take informative fieldtrips involving, geology, forest biology, nature in art and writing, and cultural history. Jack Nesbit talked about the bountiful food sources found in the woods (even in August!), and how natives and early explorers depended on them. Participants were invited to try the ripe chokecherries along the forest edge. Michael Hamilton wove a geologic story that covered 1.2 billion years, the traces of which are frozen in the rocks of the Dishman Hills. It was impressive how many of the major geologic events of the West can be found by looking at the Hill's outcrops. Kat Hall from the Land Council ran the group up to the dried ponds to discuss forest succession and fire and pond ecology. John Hall from Freeman high school presented "hikeable lessons" as an example using stops along trails to teach. A good and educational time was had by all. Money, support, and caffeine was supplied by Avista, The Pacific Educational Institute, and Roast House Coffee; we really appreciate it, thanks.

It would be worthy project to capture these great informational hikes in writings, illustrations, and lesson plans for future events. Sounds like a fine volunteer opportunity for a educationally oriented person who loves the outdoors! Already the workshop has succeeded in generating interest in using our forest to awaken kids to the wonders it holds. The Conservancy will join Jefferson Elementary at the end of the month for educational fieldtrips.

The bee is more honored than other animals,
not because she labors, but she labors for others
— St. John Chrysoston (345-407AD)

UPCOMING FALL EVENTS

The early Fall season is usually full of activity in anticipation of the colder, wetter months coming up ahead. On September 28th we will be celebrating National Trail Day by doing some trail work in the Natural Area. Our redesign of some of our trails into loops that steer oblivious hikers from entering private land is not yet complete. Trail work will help complete this redesign. The meeting place is the 12th Ave. or Siesta Dr. trailhead on the east side of the Natural Area. The time will from 9 am to about 12 noon. To sign up for this event go online to our website and click this event listed there.

All will have a chance to meet our new executive director, Eric Robison, on October 8, Tuesday, at a cocktail/social event at Mountain Gears retail store at 2002 North Division. This starts at 5:30 pm and runs until 7:30pm. Drinks and hor d'oeuvres will be provided. This is also a Green Drinks event, which refers to a informal fraternity of outdoor enthusiasts rather than the color of the drinks served. This event will be a great chance to chat with Eric, DHC board members, and other interesting characters.

Mountain Gear has been a real hero for our Conservancy. They have offered a 5% donation on all purchases the evening of the 8th, so plan on buying some equipment during our social event. They have also been very, very generous in providing office space for Eric in their corporate headquarters in the Spokane Valley.



Welcome to Fall



CONSERVANCY 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 Eric Robison, 202-0767, if you have questions. Our board meets every month on the third Tuesday. Our next meeting will be October 15th, 7 pm. We will meet at Mountain Gear Corporate headquarters, 6021 East Mansfield in the Spokane Valley. Visitors are always welcomed.

The following are our August donors that have consented to be listed: Nancy Cashon, Joseph Collins, Robert Conquergood, Cathy Gillett, Jerry King, Camille Kovarik, Cynthia Langlois, Mark Nelson, Mary Ruud, Joseph Sanders, Ed Schmidt, Jim VanderMeer, Peter Wyman, and one anonymous donor. Thank you all.

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: Dishman Hills Conservancy

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