



The mission of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is to assist Pierce County communities in the creation and maintenance of a connected system of non-motorized trails from Mt. Rainier to Puget Sound.

September 2003

The TRAIL LINE NEWS

Vol. 17 No. 3

President's message

Our tricky government

If you have never called or written to your congressman, now is a good time to start. For those of you who are in the habit, we urge you to get to your pen, phone or computer.

The Transportation Enhancements (TE) program is at risk. This is the program that, with modest local matching money, has made possible in Pierce County the Foothills Trail, the Puyallup Riverwalk, the SR-16 bike path, the Milton Interurban Trail, Tacoma and Puyallup downtown Street Scape Improvements, Bridgeport Way improvements and more. Statewide, Washington has benefited by more than \$97 million from the TE program over the past decade. This has provided a good start toward a balanced transportation system and improved the livability of our communities.

The Transportation Enhancements program as mandated by congress in 1991 is a ten percent set aside of federal transportation highway moneys allocated to each state to be spent on selected non-traditional projects. These include bicycle/pedestrian facilities, acquisition of scenic easements and historical sites, historic preservation, mitigation of water pollution and highway runoff, control and removal of outdoor advertising, rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings and structures, including railroad facilities and canals, landscaping and other scenic beautification and last (and most important to us) preservation of abandoned railway corridors, including conversion and use for pedestrian or bicycle paths.

Enhancements have so far survived two budget authorization cycles and are now going through a third. Each time it has been a major battle with the traditional highway industry, trucking interests and other traditionalists. Despite the great success and popularity of the TE program it is again at risk.

The situation changes almost daily. On July 11 the Transportation/Treasury Appropriations Subcommittee recommended deleting the program while at the same time it recommended an increase in overall transportation funding to \$33.4 billion, even more than what President Bush requested. On July 24 an amendment

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A changing of the keys

The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition has a new treasurer. Stan Engle, our faithful, frugal and efficient treasurer for more than 15 years has relinquished this essential responsibility to board member Art Robinson. Art is a retired teacher who, among other qualifications, has ongoing experience as treasurer of a local investment club. He was formally elected FRTTC treasurer on Thursday, July 24, after Stan had indicated his wish to retire from the position to spend more time with his wife Helen and his many children and grandchildren.

Happily, Stan intends to remain on the board, at least for now.

During Stan Engle's tenure as treasurer, he has managed nearly a million dollars in grants, dues, fundraising events and donations to our organization. Moreover he leaves the position with a perfect audit record. We thank you for your service Stan, more than words can say.—
Ernie Bay

FTC staffs Fair booth

The Foothills Trail Coalition has a booth at the Puyallup Fair again this year, and its "look" will reflect our regional trail vision. The Foothills Trail represents the backbone of that vision. An updated map is being produced as a centerpiece eye catcher. Greater interaction, perhaps with an opportunity for written comment by fair goers, is expected.

Last year the Edgewood-Milton presentation received a lot of attention with its combination of map and pictures of the Interurban Trail project. It is hoped that showing more places connected by trails will attract increased public attention by bringing "trails" closer to where people live. T

rails are safe and pleasant places to get around outside of a car. Elsewhere in this edition of the *Trail Line News* you can read that a majority of people want their communities to include better bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

continued on next page

President's message (continued)

before the whole Appropriations Committee to fully restore Transportation Enhancements funding was defeated by a vote of 33 to 29. On July 25 after two postponements, a full committee markup of the bill eliminated the provision that would have prohibited spending for Enhancements and added moneys for transit and Amtrak. At first reading this seemed to be great news, and to an extent it is, but there remains a catch: the new amendment eliminated the mandated ten percent set aside, but provided that state transportation departments can spend from their federal allocations for enhancements at their discretion-risky business that we can't count on!

A message that I received from Congressman John Nethercutt's office on July 28, assured me that I would "be pleased to learn that Enhancement Funding has been fully restored." No reference was made to the state's discretion caveat, and the aide who responded indicated in a separate email that he was leaving the congressman's staff the next day. We have since learned that Congressmen Nethercutt voted against our interest and Norm Dicks voted in favor.

The bottom line is that many people are left with the illusion that all is well, and it is not! SAFETEA 2003 (Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act) is anything but safe. After September 1, 2003, the transportation bill goes to conference committee to resolve the House and Senate versions, and then to the respective floors for full vote. The current Enhancements authorization expires September 30, 2003. A major battle for a balanced transportation system lies ahead. Man your stations!

For more details and up-to-date information, please visit the RTC website railtrails.org.—*Ernie Bay*

FTC Fair booth (continued)

We hope that the appeal of this year's booth will help people make the connection between those wishes and the satisfaction that a system of regional trails could provide.

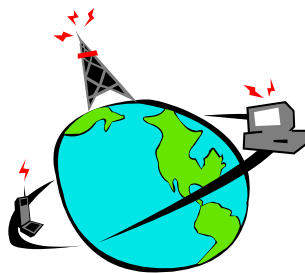
Pierce County and many cities are moving ahead with their own plans. Could more trails be developed faster and more efficiently as a regional project? The Coalition will bring the question up at this year's Puyallup Fair. Drop by and tell us what you think.

Sometimes if you want to see a change for the better you have to take things into your own hands.—*Clint Eastwood*

Trail Line News is published quarterly by the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition, P.O. Box 192, Puyallup, WA 98371-0021.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition, P.O. Box 192, Puyallup, WA 98371-0021.

How to reach the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition



We want to hear from you!

State ranks 6th in nation

by Ernie Bay

Washington state rail trail miles rank sixth in the nation!

According to the latest Rail Trail Score published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, Washington State, with 545 open trail miles, ties nationally with Iowa for sixth place. Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan take the lead with just over 1,300 miles apiece, followed closely by Pennsylvania, and then New York State with 575 miles. Only Pennsylvania and California have more than our 749 project miles in progress.

Trails day was blistering

Was National Trails Day 2003 too hot? That was the consensus of the Pierce County Chapter of the Western Washington Whining Weather Wimps. Saturday June 7 capped a week of escalating temperatures at over 90 F. The normally crowded Ruston Way in Tacoma was almost absent of walkers and cars.

But that did not faze the relay team that started outside Mount Rainier's Carbon River entrance at 7 a.m. They met their projected checkpoints right on time,
continued on next page

National Trails day (continued)

including the finish at the Dickman Mill site on Ruston Way, where the Metro Park District had stocked plenty of cold water and temporary shade. City Council Member Mike Lonergan declared Trail Day in Tacoma.

For over 50 miles those 26 runners and walkers drew attention to the growing public interest in developing trails that connect our region. John Selby is credited with planning and carrying the first Rainier-to-Ruston Rail Trail Relay. His love of running and concern for safe and pleasing places to run makes him a strong advocate for trails without saying a word.

The FTC booths out on the trail reported light activity, but greeters received regular visits by committed trail supporters of all ages. South Prairie welcomed a surprising number of visitors who must have made the most of the shady sections along the undeveloped stretch heading there from Orting.

In Wilkeson a number of folks read about Robert Peloli, sharing his pictures of how the coal

mining area once looked. Then in the afternoon between 20 and 25 people got a guided tour of the Wilkeson sandstone quarry operation, past and present.

The shade in Becky Gilbertson's yard was a welcome sight for everyone attending the potluck picnic and silent auction that evening. The plants and outdoor garden objects were interesting and attracted people who were otherwise unfamiliar with the Foothills Trail, which is in clear view from Becky's home.

Regardless of the heat more of our fellow North Westerners now realize what a trail has to offer them as a result of National Trails Day 2003.

We thank all of the volunteers who helped out in Wilkeson, South Prairie, Orting, Sumner, Enumclaw, Puyallup and Tacoma. You make the difference in connecting trails with the people that are looking for them.

CALENDAR

Monthly Meetings

September 25

October 23

November 25

December 23

Monthly meetings are held on 4th Thursdays (except Nov. and Dec.) from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Puyallup Public Library, south entrance.

324 South Meridian Street

September 21

Yelm-to-Tenino Trail field trip. Contact

bugtrail@aol.com by Sept. 12.

September 23-25

Footprints and Bike Tracks Red Lion Hotel, Olympia

November 14-15

Washington State Trails Coalition 2003 conference at the Coronet Bay Environmental Learning Center, Deception Pass State Park, Whidbey Island. Contact

JohnKeates

@ci.enumclaw.wa.us

Work Parties

Check the website below or email Don Partington at don.partington@metrokc.gov for details.

Weekly Meetings

At Charlie's Restaurant

Every Wednesday at noon at Charlie's Restaurant, 113 East Main, Puyallup. All are welcome.

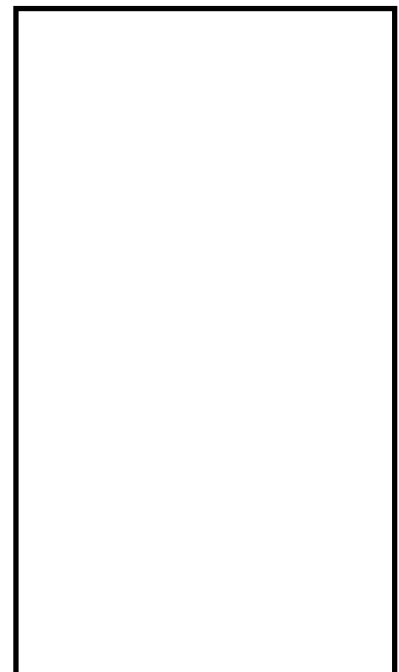
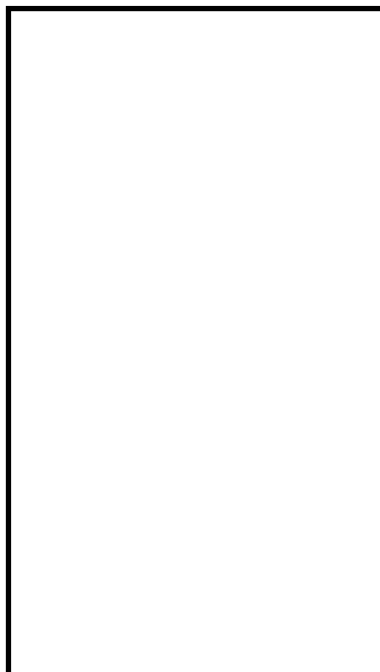
For more information

Call 253-841-2570

Or email bugtrail@aol.com
<http://piercecounitytrails.org>

What do the words success and excuses have in common? Nothing! Those who achieve success never rely on excuses. And those who rely on excuses never achieve success.—*W. Robert Collier*

Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.—*Vaclav Havel*





Enumclaw

"We had a trail clearing work party Saturday, and the trail is now open from 252nd south to the point where the old railroad trestle began. There were three tractors and numerous chain-saws going! More volunteer power than I would have guessed." This was the word from Enumclaw's Park Director, John Keates, after a successful work party held on June 21.

In August the city will be receiving a "You won!" notice from the state that says, "Your request for WWRP funds are available, thanks to the 2003 legislature." The city must then accept or reject the grant based on their willingness to match funds and carry out the project.

For National Trails Day on June 7, horse riders, bicyclists and other trail supporters turned out at the location where the trail will cross 252nd. The mayor proclaimed the day to be the first such day in Enumclaw's history. Most of those assembled took the 3/4-mile walk to where the bush hadn't been cut for years.

Keates says, "The next task will be a temporary path from Mud Mountain Road to the trail."

Puyallup

The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition and supporters of Puyallup's Riverwalk Trail Linear Park join in congratulating Puyallup's Parks and Recreation Director Ralph Dannenberg and Mayor Cathy Turner for helping to acquire two highly competitive grants. Both are for the western continuation of the existing popular trail which extends two thirds of a mile along the southern bank of the Puyallup River from the Milwaukee Avenue Bridge at 5th Street NE to the

River Road K-Mart.

The first award is an I.A.C. (Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation) state grant in the amount of \$500,000, which is the largest amount that this agency can give. The second is a grant of \$138,000 from the Puyallup Tribe, awarded as part of their distribution of community impact funds. The tribe, as required by their gambling pact with the state, makes an annual contribution to Pierce County and to the cities of Tacoma Fife and Puyallup. The funds represent two percent of the tribe's casino earnings, and normally go to sidewalks and traffic improvements. Additional moneys are awarded to local nonprofit organizations. Projects are voted on annually by a committee comprising representatives of the tribe and affected local governments.

We are elated with the Puyallup Tribe's award, as we believe this will encourage progress in developing the much-needed trail along the levy between Puyallup and Tacoma. This trail will eventually benefit the community at large as much as it will the tribe's pending mega-resort complex at River Road and I-5.

City of Puyallup engineer Dan Repp, who is partially assigned to the parks department

in pursuit of completing the Riverwalk, is targeting construction bids for May 1, 2004. The completed Riverwalk will be 3.2 miles long and will extend between the existing city limits.

Milton's open house

On July 24, the City of Milton held an open house to solicit public comments on plans for development of the Interurban Trail. Maps, drawings, photographs and scale models were displayed, showing the proposed trail development along the old Interurban corridor that transects the City of Milton through both King and Pierce Counties. The trail will be built primarily on the alignment of the old rail line adjacent to Sweetwater Creek, a tributary of the east branch of Hylebos Creek.

Several trailheads will be developed with parking, signage and other amenities. A scale model was displayed of an innovative kiosk which looked much like the end of a trolley car.

Marlo De Rosia, Milton Public Works / Parks & Recreation Director, and members of the ENTRANCO engineering team were on hand to answer questions about the trail design, its relationship to the community and natural features and its de-

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Foothills Trail Coalition Board

President	Ernie Bay	253-848-7718	bugtrail@aol.com
Executive Director	Chuck Morrison	253-927-6838	suave51@juno.com
Secretary	Bill Harmon	253-475-1537	charmon@uswest.net
Treasurer	Art Robinson	253-964-3387	ajr4142@att.net
Board Members	Stan Engle	253-564-3112	hengle@earthlink.net
	Buzz Grant	253-845-4991	grantbu@ctt.com
	John Downs	360-897-2617	johndowns@juno.com
	Marie Bailey Reed	253-847-8647	delreed@telisphere.com
	Joan Miller	360-829-0537	portlist@tx3.com
	Linda Clark	360-897-6163	clasyrydr@aol.com
	Clive Berglund	360-893-8655	SeaJayBerg@aol.com
	Russell Matthews	253-939-1611	russ-matthews@attbi.com
	Ken Woolery	253-863-4774	no e-mail

Networking (continued)

velopment schedule. Construction is to begin in about one year on the segment west of Enchanted Parkway to the 70th Avenue E. overpass of I5. At about that time, the state will begin widening Enchanted Parkway to five lanes, and it is hoped that grant money can be found by then to fund a pedestrian tunnel under the roadway to avoid crossing at the traffic light on 28th Avenue.

Currently the critical path activities are acquiring the necessary environmental permits and completing plans for raising the grade of the trail at S. 380th Place to meet an eight percent maximum slope requirement. After tunnel funding is resolved, planning will begin for the segment east of Enchanted Parkway to the Edgewood City boundary about 180 yards east of Military Road.

South Prairie Delay

On again, off again, on again! Our anticipation for the promised completion of the Orting to South Prairie section of the Foothills Trail continues to see-saw. First, serious bouts of cancer afflicted a principal planner and our beloved trail coordinator, Claudia Peters, slowing final preparatory work required by the Department of Transportation.

Meanwhile, the process of right-of-way file certification revealed title problems that had to be rectified, causing further de-

lay. These are now mostly corrected, and we are told there is still the possibility of going to bid for construction in September. More likely, because of procedural time requirements, our experience tells us we will not likely see actual paving before early 2004. Meanwhile, volunteers and parks maintenance crews have kept the unimproved route cleared for your adventure and enjoyment by foot, mountain bike and horse.

Wilkeson Bridge

by Dixie Gatchell

Have you noticed the activity around the old railroad bridge as you enter Wilkeson? Historically significant for mining, timbering and railroading, Wilkeson is now up-and-coming, not only as the gateway to the Carbon River area of Mount Rainier National Park, but also as a future trail-head site for the South Prairie to Carbonado spur of the Foothills Trail. Many enthusiastic volunteers, rallied by the Coalition's indefatigable crew leader Don Partington, worked on the myriad of tasks required to rehabilitate the bridge.

Please join in the effort, or feel free to stop by to trailside superintend and admire. The completion last summer of the Cascade Crossing Bridge, accessible from Lower Burnett Road, provides another vital link in this spur, tentatively scheduled for work to begin in 2006.

Wilkeson converts bridge

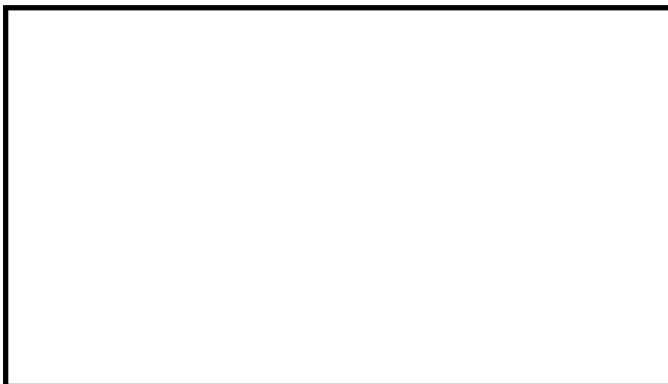
Saturday July 12 was a bright and sunny day in Wilkeson for the first day of a bridge conversion project. A railroad bridge has crossed Gale Creek at the north edge of town for over 125 years, but the rails were removed and the bridge has been barricaded for the last 16. By September, however, the 104-foot span will serve pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. Many local walkers and horse back riders dropped by and told us they welcomed the improvement.

Coalition members have been eager to convert this bridge ever since they finished the wetlands bridge near the Carbon River in 1998. Grant sources have provided a majority of the funds needed to reposition many of the remaining ties, lay out the decking and erect hand rails. There were 17 volunteers working during the first two days logging 200 hours in preparing the bridge.

The barricades went back up on Sunday and the next work session will begin in August after delivery of custom-cut wood products. Completion of the conversion process is expected by Labor Day.

Converting the bridge from rail to trail will be the first improvement outside the Orting-Buckley line. It is hard to believe, but the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition has been in-

continued on next page



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South Prairie, WA 98385
Phone 360-897-9987

Networking (continued)

involved in seven previous bridge conversions during its 16-year existence. With the exception of a four-acre planting project (delayed until 2004), this will be the largest project taken on by the Coalition.



Earl Mikelson

Meet your board

by Ernie Bay

One of our newest and most active board members is Earl Mikelson. Earl and his wife Glory can often be found on the trail and at work parties. Both helped with daffodil planting along the Puyallup Riverwalk and at the McMillin Trailhead this past spring.

Earl retired in 2002 from Wheelabrator Corp., a division of US Filter, as a technical sales representative. After spending

most of his life and career in Wisconsin, and most recently in Georgia, he and Glory moved to Bonney Lake three years ago.

Earl has a degree in mechanical engineering from Marquette University, which makes him a great help in our bridge building projects. He and Glory became interested in biking after moving here from Georgia in 2000 and feel it is important that there be non-motorized trails for their grandchildren.

From the saddle

Sharing the Trail

The Foothills Trail has a remarkable concept regarding multi-shared use. As an equestrian user this is much appreciated. While enjoying the trail on horseback we had the pleasure of interacting with many other trail users. To preserve and promote positive attitudes toward horses on the trail, the following etiquette is suggested:

1. Ride on the area provided adjacent to the asphalt. Stay off asphalt.
2. Dismount and lead horses across all bridges. Access the bridge only when clear of other trail users. Ask other users to wait until horses are off bridge before entering to prevent accidents.
3. Clean up or spread all horse droppings. Remove droppings from city park areas.
4. Tie horses to provided hitching posts only.

5. Remember other trail users may not be horse savvy. Please use caution to avoid mishaps.

6. If you have hauled your horse be sure to leave the parking area as clean or cleaner than you found it. Pick up any hay or debris.

7. Have a great ride and enjoy meeting fellow trail users.

You probably already practice the above manners but some riders may be unaware of these important safety precautions. Please pass the work to fellow riders to everyone can have a pleasant experience while using the trail.

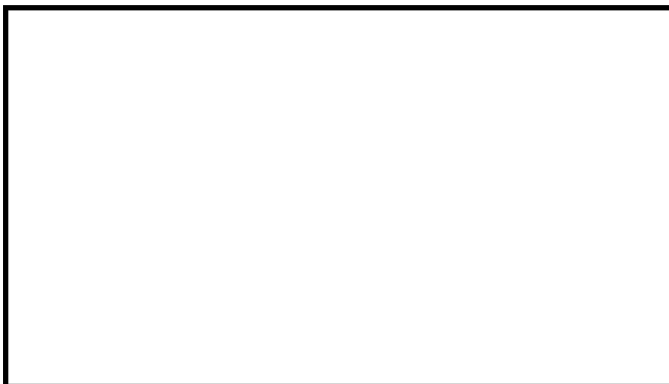
If you are a horse minded person or group and would like to become involved in the Foothills Trail Coalition, contact Linda Clark at 360-897-6163. Happy trails!

Here is a testimony from an equestrian about a wonderful experience they had on our trail system. If you ride the Foothills Trail and would like to share your experience, please email to bugtrail@aol.com or write to Foothills Trail Coalition, PO Box 192, Puyallup, WA 98371-0021.



About two years ago I revived a life-long passion for equestrian sports by getting my then seven-year-old daughter riding. When she became an independent rider, hitting the trails seemed like the perfect way to help us relax and have some fun while

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Letter (continued)

working further on our confidence and skills with horses. We tried riding forest-land trails a couple times, but found them a little unnerving because we never knew when we would run into a motor-cross pack. It also seemed very far away from any assistance should a child-rider become hurt. So we hit the Foothills Trail.

The Foothills Rail-Trail has turned out to be the perfect training ground for us. After walking a short stretch of the trail along the Carbon River, we've now worked our way with friends to Arnold's Texaco in South Prairie where the kids can safely dismount and get a treat before heading home—sometimes at a trot or canter! The horses are getting acclimated to the sounds of motorized vehicles without the trauma of having one pop out of a bush at them. That's a more relaxing ride for all of us.

I have to admit, I don't go towards civilization (Orting) when riding the trails. Rather, the farther out we can go, the better. So our family is really looking forward to the trail connecting with Wilkeson and beyond. But for now, the trails that are in place give us the opportunity to work up to backcountry trail riding and, eventually, fox hunting at the Woodbrook Hunt Club. *Rena Shawver and daughter Meghan Oakes, Orting*



Bob and Florence Larsen take a break from the courtesy patrol to assist with our National Trails Day information table at the Puyallup River Road Fred Meyer Store. Response was very positive and several new memberships were acquired.

Members and donations

\$18 - 25

Ken Baker, Terry & Janice Bartlett, William & Rhoda Barton, Warren & Sheila Bayard, Rae N. Blevins, Gail & Charles Bronson, Margie Brubaker, Rodney & Linda Carlson, Jack & Angela Connelly, Ronald & Elizabeth Cooper, Madeline Davidson, Marjorie Demers, E. Eastburn, Lois & Gary Erath, Gino & Florence Fabiani, Donald &

Donna Falk, Art & Phyllis Forbes, Richard Frans, Sarah & Robert Garmire, Loras Gassmann, Peggy Sue Gerlock.

J. & D. Gilbertson, John Gillie, Mark & Nancy Grubb, Steven Hagoski, Diane & Robert Harris, James E. Hays, Nancy & Michael Herold, Earl & Gladys Hill, Martha Humphrey, Frank H. Jacobs, Gary R. Knudson, Robert & Karen Koreis, Lance & Pamela Marshall, Carolyn & James Nelson, Roger Nix, John R. Olson, Jeff & Kristy Power, Edward & Kay Pullen, Bruce Pyrah & Evonne Howard, Ami Raynor, L. Lee & Dianna Rowe.

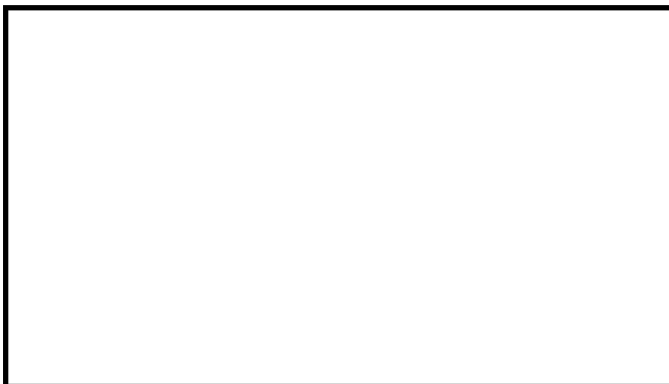
John & Thelma Sacklin, Rebecca M Splinter, Clarence & Judy Stephens, Rich & Candy Stewart, Frank & Susan Swanson, Donna Tait, Theodore & Gisela Taranovski, Eve & Robert Waters, Judy & Glen Wickett, Julia & Scott Wolbert, WSH Gully Collier

\$26 - 99

Louise Belcher (Allphaze Commercial Int.), Bert Brown, Stephen Burstein, Lisa Corkum, Colleen Dixon, Jane & Steven Galbraith, Sven & Pamela Holm, Merle & Judy Klingman, Darlene E. Lewis, Robin & Don Partington, Beverly Pierson, Bob & Kathy Spence, Dr. & Mrs. Ralph Stagner, Paul & Christine Swinehart, Cynthia Thompson, Ed Vervoort, Anna Graham & Frederick Wolf

\$100 - 499

Dan Grimm, John & Carole
continued on next page



Donations (continued)

Holmaas, Tracie Johnson, David L. Lee, Bob Myrick (2 bricks), Sara Officer, Richard Olexick, Weeks/Whitmore Funeral Home, George & Marie Weis, Robert & Patti Young.

Brick and tree names added

We are pleased to report that on July 24 the 38 new names that subscribed over the past year were added to the Foothills Trail Coalition's Orting kiosk. The newly engraved bricks can be located beneath the trail sign on the north side of the bench facing the trail.

New brick inscriptions received since July 24 will be inscribed in July 2004. Plantings for accrued tree subscriptions will be honored in the spring of 2004 and trees will be established along the scheduled South Prairie trail section.

Wolfrom & Edith Albicht, Alan Albicht, Shanon & Bryan Albicht, Kim & David Albicht, Linda & Len Johnson, "Harvest Moon" Kehaulani, Ward F. Bradley, Robert & Corrine Wilkinson, Marc & Janice Walston, Dale Blum, Are Blum, John Wenzen, Fred & Susan Hemmer, in Memory of Stan Ryder.

Jim Oberlander, Darla Chatburn, Charlie Chatburn, Sadie Sherburn, Chris Conant, Gabe Conant, Portia Conant, Jon Conant, Linda Skywalker, Jim O 201, John & Barbara Skinner, Hon. Bertil E. Johnson (Ret.), Christina Roberta Holm, Vicki Myrick, Jan Wieser, Madison Turpin, Evan Turpin, Jason, Veronica & Cameo Kaipainen, Lt. Col. Joanne L. Moran, R.N., USAF (Ret.), Pete N. Hoshiko Weir, Michael E. Yanasak, Barbara F. Yanasak, Edward J. Yanasak, Whitney K. Grimm.



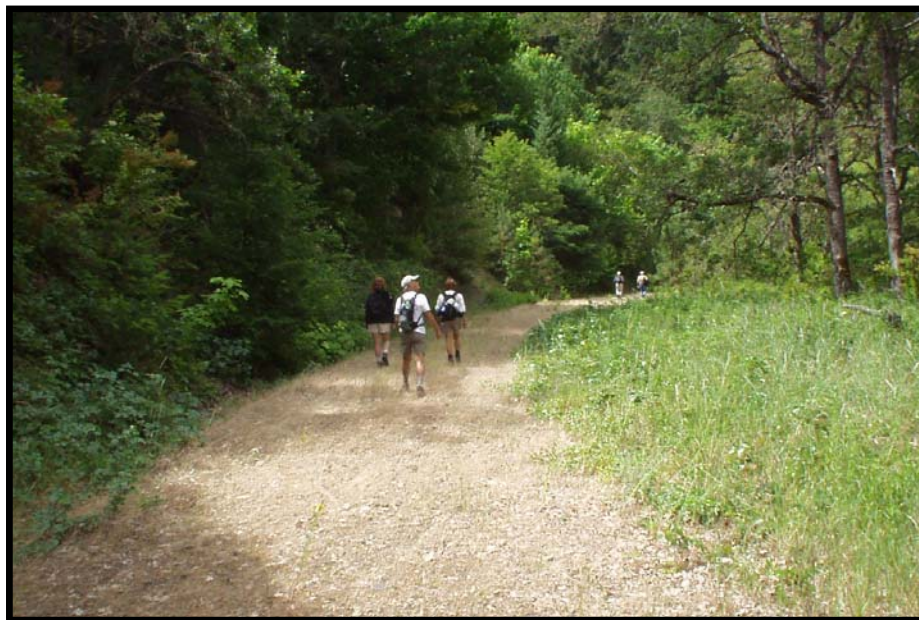
Special events coordinator Ken Woolery checks off memorial and honorary brick subscriptions as Kelly Emerick of Tacoma Monumental Works masks bricks at Foothills Trail kiosk in Orting. Bricks were engraved on Thursday, July 24.

Thurston Trail field trip planned

by Ernie Bay

The Thurston County trail system is connecting its dashes. In 1993 Thurston County Parks acquired a 400-foot railroad corridor between Rainier and Tenino for the Yelm-to-Tenino Trail. In August the county will pave the 2.5-mile western junction gap that will join it at Yelm to the Chehelis Western Trail which begins in Lacey. The distance will be approximately 20 miles. In 2004 the Yelm-to-Tenino Trail is scheduled for completion, which will add another seven miles to the 7.5 miles that were paved in 2000 and 2001. This will allow for a continuous, 34-mile ride to Tenino beginning at Chambers Lake on 14th Street in Lacey.

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Coalition members Ernie Bay, Steve Brown and Bob Myrick enjoyed a magnificent day on our June 22 field trip, as advertised in our June newsletter. The walk on the Klickitat Trail took us along the river through splendid scenery, varied vegetation, throngs of butterflies, intriguing geology and by interesting archeological sites. Among these were the remnants of capped natural sulfur springs that had once been used for CO2 production. The sulfur waters continue to bubble forth. Bob Hansen and Joe Kelsey of the Klickitat Trail Coalition who hosted the walk were very knowledgeable about the local birds and flowers, and Foothills Trail Coalition President Ernie Bay filled in on the bees.

Field trip (continued)

Let's celebrate the first day of fall with a visit to Thurston County's newest rail trail, the Yelm-to-Tenino Trail. This is a mostly rural trail that passes near rolling pastures and through cool woodlands. It is exciting to think that one day it will be connected with our own Pierce County trail system.

If you would like to join us for this trip on Sunday morning, September 21, please respond by email to bugtrail@aol.com. Trip details will be arranged a week in advance.

Polls prove what we know

Americans favor increased investment in pedestrian and bicycle facilities

Recent surveys demonstrate strong public support for improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The first poll, conducted by the Gallup Organization for the National Highway Safety Administration and the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, found that 73 percent of respondents believed that communities should provide bicycle-specific facilities such as trails, paths and traffic signals, and that 75 percent believed that changes were necessary to improve and expand pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, signals and crosswalks. The survey, which emphasized the need for improvements in community planning to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, was released just days before Congress received the Department of Transportation's final proposal, eliminating the reauthorization of TEA-21 money for public trails.

The second survey, conducted by Beldon Russonello and Stewart for America Bikes, found that a majority of Ameri-

cans want to bicycle more and are willing to invest tax dollars in creating better places to bike. According to the poll, 53 percent of those surveyed supported increased federal spending on bicycle facilities, even if it means less gas taxes go to construction of new roads. Additionally, 50 percent supported requiring roads to include bicycle lanes or paths, even if it means less space for cars and trucks.

Both surveys follow a recent STPP poll that found that the American public wants to walk more places more often, and is willing to invest in making it possible. That survey, also conducted by Beldon Russonello and Stewart, found that 68 percent favor putting more federal dollars toward improving walkability, even within a constrained budget.

WWRP funded at \$45 million

It has been said that there are three types of people in the world—those who make things happen, those who watch things happen and those who wonder what happened. Thanks to your efforts, Coalition members are in the first group.

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) guarantees statewide park improvements and acquisition. Program funds, leveraged with local funds, have been a principle source in delivering, not only the Foothills Trail, but the Green River, Interurban and Cedar River Trails. Improvements like the Dickman Mill site along Ruston Way, Edgewood's first park, Carbonado's kid park, Lake-wood's and Gig Harbor's skate parks all benefited from the WWRP. Look for the IAC (Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation) metal plaque somewhere around any of these projects.

The WWRP is supported by the WWR Coalition who held an end-of-the-legislative-session celebration on June 17. The event was attended by state and local park officials, legislators from both sides of the aisle and organizations from the Audubon Society to the Sierra Club, including the Foothills Trail Coalition.

Personal comments from the public really do count. The legislators told us that individual comments on how well WWRP projects have been accepted and on how many more dreams remain only on paper convinced them to fully fund the requested \$45 million and maintain past spending levels. The beginning budget was only \$30 million.

To those of you who took the time to call, write or e-mail:

Thank You!

Ending federal support for trails?

by Chuck Morrison

Spending for motorized transportation may again be the only use for federal transportation dollars.

On July 24 the full House Appropriation Committee expressly eliminated bicycle and pedestrian spending from its 2004 transportation budget. This vote affirmed the action taken 13 days earlier in a subcommittee vote. Since 1992 rail trail and other bicycle/pedestrian improvements have amounted to less than five percent of federal highway spending, or about half of the total set-aside program known as Transportation Enhancements (TE).

The full House is expected to vote on the issue in September after a Labor Day recess.

TE money has been available to supplement state, county and city projects on a matching basis for the last 12 years. It was a

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Federal (continued)

novel approach that attempted to balance out the motorized-vehicle-centered planning and building that exploded in the mid 1950's. The TE program spread \$600 million annually across the nation to help self-powered travelers literally get back on their feet.

Groups such as America Bikes and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy will be lobbying with health providers like never before to persuade both congressional branches to retain what they believe is essential planning for our nation's future.

Your email, letters and phone calls to your congressional representatives will be essential to restoring the TE program money.

Novel water tanker beats the drought

For the last two years, the Kiwanis Club of Puyallup has been attempting to develop a meadow-grove wildflower park between Tiffany's Skate Inn and the Puyallup Riverwalk. Dennis King, Skate Inn owner, and Ernie Bay of the club's community services committee have



Ernie's water wagon.

been the prime players in the project. Unfortunately, poor fill soil and two years of excessive drought have done in most of the original evergreen plantings and many of the replacements.

Although a beautiful variety of wildflowers have survived, most have withered away. We have not given up, however, because we know that next year will always provide trail passersby with a spectacular

display. Meanwhile, in an attempt to rescue the remaining trees and flowering shrubs, Ernie has developed a novel bicycle-drawn water tanker. The tanker effortlessly carries up to 20 gallons of water the few hundred feet across Dennis's parking lot to the parched grove.

Ernie also finds the empty tanker an excellent litter receptacle as he travels the trail to and from his home.

Courtesy patrol checks in

by Dixie Gatchell

Among the unique marvels of living near a low-elevation, easily-accessed trail such as the Foothills, is being able to enjoy it throughout the year in foul weather or fair. Winter, spring, summer or fall, the courtesy patrol is there to see exciting things happen along the Foothills Trail.

Clay and I are especially fond of the fall months with the colors changing, the salmon running and the kids returning to school. We enjoy watching the young folks, whether on bikes, scooters, skates or afoot, managing to counterbalance those ubiquitous backpacks with bigger-than-they-are musical instrument cases.

It's easy to enjoy trail recreating, but the prime focus of the rails-to-trails concept is providing everyone safe places for non-motorized modes of

transportation. Most of all we love meeting and greeting the wonderful folks, whom we have dubbed Friends of the Foothills, that we encounter in our daily courtesy patrols.

It's a thrill to watch trail travel opportunities expand as the various trail segments come together in our state. And it's a sad shame that community-friendly projects were given short shrift by the House Appropriations Committee with a last-minute voice vote, giving states the option of using federal highway funds for roads instead of trails. [See article elsewhere in this issue.] Previous to this last-minute action, Congress required that a small percentage, known as Transportation Enhancement grants, be designated for projects, such as bicycle trails, that enhance communities.

continued on next page

Courtesy (continued)

Do you think our friends along the Foothills Trail will allow our elected representatives to get away with this? We don't intend to!

Expectations are high that the long-awaited trail extension between the Wetlands Bridge and the paved portion in South Prairie will start in late fall, good Lord willin' and the creek don't rise. It ain't easy building a trail! In the meantime, we continue the joy of running along South Prairie Creek on the existing unpaved portion.

Summer has been warm and mellow along the Foothills with few adverse incidents to report other than occasional bandages dispensed here and there and three or four shouted (and ignored) admonishments to motorcycle riders who don't belong on our trail. Volunteer trail stewards and Pierce County parks crews continue their stellar job of keeping our trail free of garbage and debris. A couple of litter-slobs did themselves proud by dumping an old boat filled with dilapidated bicycles and junk alongside the trail. Another dropped off a truck-load of old trash right smack dab in front of the Pierce County mitigation gate on the unpaved portion of the trail. Just who do these thoughtless folks think hauls their trash away? Ah, well, Happy Trails!

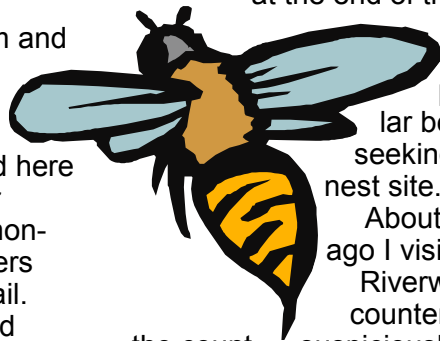
Trail user counts bugged

by Ernie Bay

Readers all know that our email moniker is bugtrail, and from our trail user counts as reported in our newsletters you know that both the Foothills Trail and the Puyallup Riverwalk are indeed bugged with counting sensors. Now it turns out that the "bugs" are bugged. As a trail technophile trying to keep a re-

cord of users I find this frustrating, but as an entomologist I find it fascinating.

After finally giving up on our previous trail counter technology because of problems with two-legged vandals, we have changed to a model that is now beset by six-legged forms. The previous device was too large to reliably conceal, and used a reflected beam. Our present system has a hollow tube detector probe slightly larger than a soda straw, and does not require a reflector. Unfortunately, the hole at the end of the probe



is just what a particular bee is seeking as a nest site.

About a month ago I visited our Riverwalk counter to find the count suspiciously low. Upon withdrawing and inspecting the probe I laughed in amazement that a single bee was able to discover and effectively seal off this hidden aperture. Packed within the tube were a series of cells, each with a developing larva bathed in a paste of honey and pollen, and partitioned from its neighbor by a silken wall. The bee, of the genus *Prosopus*, normally utilizes the burrows of other insects as well as hollow stems of pithy plants for its nest sites. You may ask, "How does the bee from the first-laid egg at the caboose of the series emerge to the front?" First in . . . last out!

Seeking to prevent further instances of this annoyance/fascination, I bisected the aperture of the probes with fine strands of wire and assumed the problem solved. The following week the Puyallup count was again mysteriously low. Puzzled, I peered through the probe to witness two small scurrying spiders that had taken up resi-

dence. Next I visited the Foothills counter and was again amazed. Not more than an hour after I had installed the modified probe the previous week, another bee had slipped by my barrier and stopped the count after user number eight. And I thought squirrels were smart. This is beginning to bug me!

Trail users counted

Trail counts for the least traveled easternmost end of the Puyallup Riverwalk, and Bob's Place on the Foothills Trail have respectively averaged approximately 100 and 200 visitors per day during June and July—not counting spiders and bees! Actual counts for both locations are suspected to be about 20 percent higher. On-site observations have revealed that fast-moving bicycles are sometimes not recorded.

Don Schmidt memorial planned

by Ernie Bay

Last spring the Foothills Trail lost our long-time member and friend Don Schmidt. At the start of the Foothills Trail campaign in 1987, Don was president of the Tahoma Branch of the Mountaineers, and it was he who championed our very first grant, which the Mountaineers contributed in the amount of \$500.

To honor his memory a picnic and rest area along the Foothills Trail in the Orting valley is planned for the McMillin Trailhead. The area will consist of a picnic table, a bench and a memorial plaque. The approximate cost of the memorial is \$1,000.

Persons wishing to contribute to this special memorial for Don may send a donation in the form of a check to the Foothills Rail-to-Trails Coalition, indicating that it is for the "Don Schmidt Rest Memorial."

New Members Always Welcome

If you appreciate the work that we are doing and wish to see more trails, please consider joining us. Foothills Trail memberships start at \$18 single and \$25 family. Credit cards accepted.



- \$18 Single \$25 Couple \$50 Trail Builder
- \$100 Hero Even more! Honorary Member

Trees for the Trail / Orting Trail Kiosk Engraved Bricks

_____ Number of tree(s)

_____ Number of brick(s)

@ \$50 per tree or brick = \$ _____

Name(s) to appear on Tree Tag or Brick _____

Charge my VISA or Mastercard

No: _____ Exp: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Signature: _____

Mark your categories, mail form and check to:

Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition

P.O. Box 192, Puyallup, WA 98371-0021

Proposal targets highway fund spending rules

Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- Money for bicycle paths and railroad station restorations could dry up next year after a key House committee voted recently to allow states to spend the funds on roads instead. For the past 12 years, Congress required states to set aside a small percentage of their federal highway money for projects to enhance communities, such as pedestrian walkways, recreational trails, tourist service facilities and historic building renovations. But the House Appropriations Committee approved a proposal by voice vote to give states the option of spending that money--\$600 million in 2004--on road projects.

Environmental groups oppose the plan.

The proposal still must go before the full House and the Senate must approve the idea for it to take effect.

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