Over 300 people have already signed up to run the 14th annual Rainier to Ruston Rail-Trail Relay and Ultra (R2R) including 29 ultras who will run the entire 51 miles solo! On Saturday, June 4, 2016 – National Trails Day – the R2R course will once again challenge teams of runners and ultra-runners starting near the base of Mount Rainer at the Carbon River entrance and traveling to the Puget Sound at the Tacoma waterfront on Ruston Way.

This year’s race director is Sabrina Seher, an accomplished coach and distance runner who has finished almost 100 marathons herself over the past two years. Seher is also the race director for the upcoming Buckley to Orting Half Marathon (B&O) which is being held on Saturday, July 23, 2016. To learn more about the R2R or B&O and register for either event, please visit the following website, http://www.rainiertoruston.com/registration.html.

This year’s R2R plans also call for the Beast, a Seahawks-themed...
Cross Cut Saws Needed
by Buzz Grant, Coalition President

Are there any old crosscuts hanging on walls in garages or barns? Why would anyone want something like an old crosscut saw, also known as misery whips, to saw through trees when we have a modern convince like chain saws? Face facts people. We have progressed to chain saws!

Well, there are still good reasons to use cross cut saws. There has been resurgence for the use of cross cut saws, because in wilderness areas generally it is against the law to use chain saws. Another reason is let’s say you were walking in to clear a trail of fallen trees, and you had to hike in 5 to 15 miles. Would you prefer carry a chain saw, with gas, oil, extra chains and files? And what happens if you run out of gas? Carry in a single cross cut saw and all you need is some lubricant, a file, and a little elbow grease. With a cross cut saw you come upon a downed tree and just start cutting. A chain saw requires you to set down your “stuff” then pull the cord many times. Finally it starts, but by that time with a one to a half foot tree the cross cut is finished, and you are moving on. So in a lot of cases the cross cut is faster as well as lighter.

We would love to help our friends of the Back Country Horsemen who help us so much. Also remember the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is a 503 (c) 3 non-profit organization and you can get a tax write off. Contact railroadbuzz@comcast.net if you wish to donate your cross cut saw.

If you do not think about the future, you cannot have one.
- John Gale

Foothills Trail Coalition Board

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Mission:
The mission of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is to assist Pierce County government and communities in the creation, maintenance and usage of a connected system of non-motorized trails for healthier people from Mt. Rainier to Puget Sound. The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is a 503 (c) 3 non-profit organization.

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‘You still here?’ Her eyes bored through me and her question was laced with irritation. It was only our second encounter but, little did she know that I was about to become her nemesis, and she mine, for years to come. The lady was Mary Harris, a dour, able and determined foe of Pierce County, Washington’s proposed Foothills Trail. I was just as determined that it would succeed.

The time was January 1987, and I had only learned of the project a couple of months earlier.

As a young teenager growing up in the Mohawk Valley of upstate New York I spent much of my summers with a friend exploring the marshes and backwaters of the Mohawk River. Being a naturalist at heart I longed to explore the rural countryside beyond the fenced meadows and forestlands posted with no trespassing signs along the three mile bicycle journey to our river destination. Once there, in the town of Niskayuna, our starting point was a small empty railroad station. It had side decks overlooking the river and in front rusty rails strewn with weeds and wildflowers. The sun baked incense of creosote filled the air and the chirping of crickets came from the grass.

Perched upon the riverbank the station overlooked a collection of brush forested islands surrounded by cattails, and immense floating rafts of Chinese water chestnut. It was a magnificent view that was periodically interrupted by dense patches of flowering honeysuckle, elderberry and stands of candle spired red sumac along with other riparian vegetation. From there we spent our days exploring, collecting snakes and turtles, and fishing for crappies, bullheads and strawberry bass. Beneath the summer sun aging railroad ties oozed glistening black tar bubbles. The receding rails were flanked by goldenrod, milkweed, blue chickory and Queen Anne’s lace. Black and yellow goldfinch and the occasional bluebird were common sights as were dragon flies, monarch and tiger swallow tail butterflies.

Cicadas buzzed their trailing staccato love calls and red winged blackbirds sang for their mates among the rushes.

The time was the early 1940’s. Although we never saw a single train, The Schenectady and Troy Railroad, first built in 1841 was not officially taken out of service until 1965. It had for all intents long been abandoned. The rails lay silent, rusty streaks pointing east and west separating the river shoreline from picturesque quiet backwaters and remnants of the historic Erie Canal. What a welcome reprieve from the restrictive and forbidding private property lined stretch of road that had brought us there. It was those relic rails pointing west that intrigued me most, and which inspired my dream. “Wouldn’t it be fantastic if that idyllic corridor were to continue clear across the continent, allowing hikers and bicyclists to explore and camp free from traffic and enjoy nature and its varied landscapes at their best?”

Today that dream is much a reality as the Mohawk Hudson Hike Bike Trail. Beginning in Albany and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11
Work Party Report December 2015
BY BUZZ GRANT, COALITION PRESIDENT

In continuing maintenance of the Gale Canyon portion of the Foothills Trail we have held four small work parties to cut grass, beat back encroaching blackberries and other woody vines. We fill holes and cut roots. This is a soft surface trail that we have chosen to maintain, because Gale Canyon is such a wonderful place. This is a continuing job. We do this on some Saturdays but generally during the week, when you real working people are at your real jobs. These work parties consist generally of two to five people, if we are lucky.

We do this work with great enthusiasm, because this is such a wonderful experience to pass through, a rain forest type of area with moss covered trees and the sound of Gale/Wilkeson Creek. An extension of this section of the trail is the land the Coalition purchased on November 6th (see President’s Message – this issue).

On November 7th we had a great work party in the Carbon Canyon portion of the Foothills Trail. That group consisted of 17 people and we moved tons of rock to fill in mud holes and uneven spots. We also used weed eaters to cut overhanging brush back. This section of trail is also soft surface. The day was almost a constant light rain, but we survived. We had a great pulled pork sandwich with fixings catered by John Warhol of your board of directors. This trail is on land owned by the Coalition from just upstream of Carbonado about 7/10ths of a mile. It is a very similar experience as the Gale Canyon section of the Foothills Trail. The main difference being that the Carbon River is 250 feet below you. We now have a good trail about 3 miles long from Carbonado to about 1000 feet past the Fairfax/O’Farrell/ High Bridge over the Carbon River. We hope to improve this section of the Foothills Trail about another four miles to the Kolish/Manley-Moore Bridge over the Carbon River in the next few years.

On to Mt. Rainier National Park from the Mountain to the Sound.

“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.”
- Alan Kay, U.S. computer scientist, 1940 -
The Prairie Line Trail is holding up really well and has already hosted many events – including the R2R and the groundbreaking for the Tacoma Paper and Stationery Building (Former Old Spaghetti Factory). The storm cells are also performing as expected – preventing pollutants from entering the Foss waterway, and we will welcome the Spring with furniture that will provide ample opportunity to enjoy this campus connector.
How Well Do You Know Your Pierce County Trails?

by John Selby, Board Member

Here’s your chance to win a free membership renewal in the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition. If you can describe the location of the photo below before anyone else does, you will win a one-year individual membership renewal. (Board members are excluded.) The photo in the December issue was the old powder house on the Upper Carbon River section of the Foothills Trail a mile above the Fairfax (High) Bridge. Mike Hassur guessed it. Congratulations, Mike!

Let’s see how well you do on this one. Please respond to JohnSelby16@gmail.com with your answer to “How Well Do You Know Your Pierce County Trails?” Good luck! The winner will be announced in the next issue.

A Bit of Foothills Coalition History.....

by Dixie Gatchel, Active Transportation Coordinator

The Pierce County Parks Foothills Trail project and The Rails-To-Trails Conservancy (RTC) were both founded in 1983 and had a symbiotic relationship in their early years. In January 1987, the Pierce County, Washington, Parks Department hosted an all-day trail workshop at its Sprinker Recreation Center. Peter Harnick and Peggy Robinson of RTC led the workshop and provided an invaluable impetus to our nascent Foothills Trail effort. Within a few months the Foothills Rails-To-Trails Coalition (FRTTC) RTC’s National TrailLink Conference was founded and its founding president, Ernest C. Bay, consulted frequently with RTC founding president David Burwell. Bay eventually received RTC’s first Lifetime Achievement Award in Clearwater Florida in 1998. In that same year Bay was the centerfold feature in the premier issue of the RTC magazine. RTC, meanwhile, benefitted from the severe controversy surrounding the Foothills Trail in its early days when David Burwell on one of his visits photographed a bicycle suspended from a makeshift gallows in an opponent’s front yard and used it for fundraising purposes. Our FRTTC Treasurer Loras Gassmann is a long-time supporter of RTC and was featured in a centerfold not that long back. In August 2007, nearly 300 attendees from 40 states and three countries attended RTC TrailLink conference in Portland, Oregon, for the kick-off of their 2010 Campaign for Active Transportation. Nine FRTTC members, including Bay, now our President Emeritus, attended and continue to be strong proponents for active transportation (“Burn Calories not Carbon”).
Smiles prevailed on the faces of the happy folks present at the joint Van Lierop Park/Step By Step ribbon-cutting ceremony held on January 22nd. There was plenty to celebrate. In 2015, the City of Puyallup joined with the non-profit Step By Step to purchase 24 acres of the historic Van Lierop Bulb Farm. City of Puyallup retained 18 acres as the site for a future Van Lierop Park and wasted no time in seeking funding for a shared use path running from the end of the Riverwalk Trail at the East Main Railway Overpass behind Stortinis to the newly acquired property.

Step-by-Step acquired six of the acres with an inspiring vision for helping each Mom put her best foot forward. (Link: http://stepbystepnews.org/contact/) The former Van Lierop farmhouse will serve as the main office for the organization as well as for the new Germaine Korum Center for Women and Children Legacy in Motion project. The Germaine Korum Center will focus on child care and development; parenting education; and life skills training. The Center is expected to open sometime in the spring. Step by Step is currently open for business so please take time to drop by and show your appreciation.

Potential plans for the previous gift shop include: a gift and flower shop; café and on-site catering; meeting space and event venues; on-site child care and job training programs and Foothills Trail services such as bike rental and boxed lunches. The Center is directly across from the Puyallup (Meeker) Foothills Trailhead. Step-by-Step also hopes to partner with sustainable farming community to determine how to preserve and utilize the land for agricultural purposes.

From the anecdotes passed along at the ribbon-cutting there’s no doubt that the Van Lierop Farm, with its iconic view of Mount Rainier and glorious fields of daffodils, has a special place in our hearts. I, for one shall be eternally grateful to the good people who took the bull by the horns and led the effort to assure the Van Lierop legacy would live, on and we would see flowers bloom again. Thank you, Step By Step CEO Krista Linden; Puyallup City Manager Kevin Yamamoto; Owners Neil and Lore Van Lierop; Korum Kids Foundation, Germaine and Jerry Korum; Puyallup Council members supporters Mayor John Hopkins; Deputy Mayor John Palmer; Councilmembers Julie Door; Heather Shadko, Tom Swanson and Steve Vermillion; and the many other caring people who worked to make it happen. You will find further information on how Puyallup’s Riverwalk Phase VI project fits into our mission for a Tahoma to Tacoma Regional Trail Network in this issue. Happy Trails!
Tracking the Tahoma to Tacoma Trail Network

by Dixie Gatchel, Active Transportation Coordinator

Foothills Coalition regular March Meeting Change of Venue:

Foothills Trail Coalition President Buzz Grant reports the General Meeting scheduled for March 24th has been cancelled so members can attend a meeting sponsored by the Puyallup Watershed Initiative Active Transportation Community of Interest (PWI-COI-AT). Buzz, along with Ernie Bay, Don Partington, John Ernest Berry III, and Dixie Gatchel are voting members of the PWI-COI-AT which is the sponsor of the event. The goal of the PWI-COI-AT is to ensure that everyone in the 1000 square mile Puyallup Watershed has access to safe, healthy, and affordable alternative modes of transportation. We are taking an in-depth look at two trails in particular, as part of our new report, Tahoma to Tacoma Trail Network Health and Economic Analysis. The spine of this network will run from Point Defiance Park to the Carbon River Entrance of Mount Rainier – about 50 miles in total. Approximately half of this trail has been built to date, but we need to fill the gaps. This analysis will help us make the case, to local leaders and funders of the benefits this trail will bring – from tourism, to physical activity, to air quality. In addition, this study will also analyze the benefits of the Pipeline Trail, which will run from Swan Creek Park to South Hill and could ultimately connect with the Foothills Trail in Orting. Please RSVP at http://www.pwi.org/.

How Riverwalk Trail Phase VI Project Connects into Tahoma to Tacoma Trail Network:

The Puyallup Riverwalk is a multi-use trail approximately five miles in length running along the Puyallup River. The City of Puyallup is requesting $499,000 in state capital funds toward the design and construction of a 12-foot wide, pervious-surface concrete, shared-use trail through the newly-acquired Van Lierop Park property. This section of the trail is a critical link toward connecting existing Riverwalk, Sumner Link and Foothills Trails into the regional Tahoma to Tacoma Trail network. This link is also a key cog in “Sound to Foothills Trail” vision for Pierce County. The paved portion of the Riverwalk Trail currently ends behind Mama Stortinis under the East Main Avenue and Railway Bridge at the border of farm property in Pierce County. Because of this trail users, for the time being, will continue traveling the narrow, steep-banked road on 134th Avenue until it meets the Van Lierop Park boundary. This new trail segment moves the City of Puyallup one step closer to an ultimate connection of over 38 miles of Foothills Trail segments. This connection could ultimately be followed by regional connections west to Tacoma; north to Seattle; East to King County’s Cedar River Trail; and even to the John Wayne Pioneer Trail. Want to experience the historic 50-mile Tahoma to Tacoma Trail in all its magnificence? Sign up now for the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition’s 14th annual Rainier to Ruston Rail-Trail Relay & Ultra (R2R) on National Trail Day, June 4th here: http://rainiertoruston.org.
The very important part is we now have 980 feet of trail and no major brake in the undeveloped soft surface trail from Cascade Junction to Wilkeson. On January 16, 2016, a group of 12 people went out on a windy, raining and 45-degree day to clear one-half mile of trail, which includes our 980 feet, for the public to use. It looks great.

With the $92,601 expenditure above and our promise of a $50,000 partial match for the Pierce County Parks and Recreation RCO/WWRP grant to construct the South Prairie to Buckley portion of the Foothills Trail, we definitely could use your donations and memberships. With your money we can continue to give partial matches for other trails throughout Pierce County. Often those partial matches equate to one hundred dollars for our one dollar match and give trail builders a real step up. We will also use your money to help maintain the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition’s portion of the trail from Carbonado to Melmont and someday to the Kolish/Mansley Moore Bridge and to the expansion area of Mount Rainier National Park.

Happy Trails!

To succeed, you need to find something to hold on to, something to motivate you, something to inspire you.

Tony Dorsett

Mileage Chart

Scholz Farm and Garden
14310 128th St. E.
Puyallup, WA 98374
Phone (253) 848-7604
Fax (253) 840-8699
ScholzFarm@MSN.com

Allen Scholz
Fawntella Scholz
Two Awards programs that can benefit the Foothills Trail

Fred Meyer Community Award program

Fred Meyer is donating $2.5 million per year to non-profit organizations in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington based on where their customers tell them to give. Organizations will receive Community Rewards donation checks within 90 days of the close of each quarter (March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31).

Here is how the program works:

• Sign up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to the Foothills Rails-to-Trail Coalition at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards. You can search for us by our name or by our non-profit number #94355.

• Then every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping the Foothills Rails-to-Trail Coalition earn a donation.

You still earn your Reward Points, Fuel Points, and Rebates just as you do today. If you do not have a Rewards Card, they are available at the Customer Service desk of any Fred Meyer Store.

For more information, please visit www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards.

The amount donated by Fred Meyer to the Foothills Trail for 2014 and 2015 totaled $5926.26!

Amazon Smile Award Program

How to Set Up Your Amazon Smile Account

Shop Amazon Smile and support the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition. AmazonSmile offers the same great products, deals, and shopping experience as Amazon, the only difference is Amazon donates a portion of their profits to the charitable organization of your choice. Simply visit smile.amazon.com/ and log in using your email and password and select the program you would like to support. Amazon Smile will save the information and will make a donation every time you purchase through smile.amazon.com/.

Step One: Go to smile.amazon.com/ and log in using your email and password as if you were at amazon.com from there select a charitable organization you would like to support.

Step Two: Select the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition.

Step Three: Shop, Amazon Smile will remember the charity you selected and will always donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to that charity.
coursing through my beloved backwaters, this mostly paved trail, with few interrupted stretches, extends 362 miles from Albany to Buffalo. It will eventually link with existing and developing trails clear to the Pacific Ocean, as well as others north and south.

I like to think that I may have played some small part in the inspiration for that dream come true. It was in 1972 while I was chairman of the Entomology Department at The University of Maryland in College Park that I was visiting my parents in Schenectady, New York, and my father suggested a drive to Lock 7. Lock 7 is one of several dams along the Mohawk and Erie Barge Canal which have lateral pen-like structures that behave as aquatic elevators with fortress sized gates at either end. These open and close to alternately fill and empty the pen and lift or lower a river craft, be it barge or canoe, to the next water level. In effect they flatten the river for mile-long stretches and convert it into a gigantic elongated staircase. Dad, like others, always enjoyed visiting the site and viewing the operation. Lock 7 was also one of my destinations on my boyhood river jaunts.

Once at the lock, as we exited the car my father offhandedly remarked “They are about to remove these old rails and ties.”

“What a fantastic opportunity for a bike trail” I exclaimed. It could be like the C&O Canal Trail that Chief justice William O. Douglas made possible. Chief Justice Douglas grew up near Yakima, Washington where he became a strong environmentalist and advocate for the out-of-doors. He was also one of my heroes for his vision and legendary 1954 accomplishment in thwarting a highway along the historic Chesapeake and Ohio Canal corridor, and preserving it as a trail for public use.

Impassioned, I could hardly wait to get back to Maryland where I wrote a letter to the Albany Gazette hoping to inspire public action in preserving my Mohawk playground as a bicycle trail. The next year my father sent me a full page newspaper feature on the efforts of a bicycle group, The Mohawk Wheelmen, to do just that. Spurred by the October, 1973 OPEC oil embargo, trail interest became a hot item. In 1974, a year before I left Maryland to assume a position with Washington State University in Puyallup, Washington the heart of my boyhood dream, a fourteen mile, ten foot wide stretch of paved trail, was completed.

It is now part of a trail regarded to be the most used in the country with an estimated 240,000 plus visitors per year.

Editor’s Note: This is the first installment of Ernie Bay’s personal history of the Foothills Trail.
Calendar of Events

Meetings:

Monthly Board Meetings:
Open to all members and are generally held on the 4th Thursday of each month from 7-9 p.m. at the Heritage Quest Research Library located at 1007 Main St., Sumner. Monthly meetings may be rescheduled, so check our website at www.piercecountytrails.org for changes.

Courtesy Patrol Meetings:
Scheduled the 3rd Saturday of each month at High Cedars Golf Course, 149th Street Court East, Orting. No-host breakfast starts at 8 a.m. and the casual meeting at 9 a.m. with a free-for-all discussion about the past, present and future of the Courtesy Patrol. Guest speakers and training sessions are often included. For more information please contact Ernie Bay at (253) 848-7718 or bugtrail@aol.com. Ernie is seeking a new Courtesy Patrol Leader. Could that be you?

Friends of the Riverwalk Committee:
We are an informal group of volunteers devoted to the enjoyment and betterment of the Puyallup Riverwalk. Please join us for most Monday mornings* at 8 a.m. at Mrs. Turner’s Restaurant, 701 East Main, Puyallup. We also have a group walk that starts at 9 a.m. following the meeting and is open to those who would like to join us. *Call prior to confirm in case of cancellation. Bill Hilton (253) 302-1104, billhltn@aol.com, or Janet Rich, dcnjlrich@msn.com, Puyallup City Parks 253-841-5447.

Charlie Chat - Weekly Luncheon:
Informal luncheons every Wednesday from 12-1 p.m. at Charlie’s Restaurant, 113 East Main, Puyallup. All are welcome to come and share what they have been doing to promote the mission of the Coalition. No business is conducted even if a quorum of members is present.
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Membership makes a difference!
The work we are doing is made possible because of your membership and generous support. Credit cards accepted.

- $20 Single
- $30 Family
- $50 Pathfinder
- $100 Trail Builder
- $200 Corporate  (Includes a 1 year ad in the Trail Line News)
- □ Please email my newsletter to _______________________

The Mission of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is to assist Pierce County government and communities in the creation, maintenance and usage of a connected system of non-motorized trails for healthier people from Mt. Rainier to Puget Sound.

Pay online using Pay Pal http://www.piercecountytrails.org/become-a-member/

__________________________
Mark your categories, mail form and check to:
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