Rainier to Ruston Comes of Age

BY DAVID SEAGO, COALITION MEMBER

Race founder John Selby couldn’t stop grinning all day. And plenty of other faithful volunteers -- over 120 in all -- wore constant expressions of amazement and delight during the eighth running of the Rainier to Ruston Rail-Trail Relay and Ultra on June 5, National Trails Day.

There were good reasons for all the smiles.

The weather gods granted a nice sunny day -- a blessed exception to an endless string of rainy days. And a record-smashing crowd of 507 runners and walkers turned out to take on the one-of-a-kind, 50.8-mile course on a day when the R2R truly came of age.

The turnout more than doubled last year’s participation and far exceeded the previous record of 304 set in 2008. First-time race director Rob Hester and assistant race director Eric Barnes knew from advance registrations that the turnout would be bigger than usual. Naturally, they worried. Barnes managed only a couple hours’ sleep the night before, and Hester didn’t sleep at all.

At 4 a.m., Hester ran about one mile into Gale Canyon, between Wilkeson and South Prairie, to make sure the rain-swollen creek hadn’t washed away the trail. The trail was fine; Plan B was unnecessary. In the meantime, Eric was already loading food supplies into a delivery truck.

By 7 a.m., the starting area at the Tacoma Mountaineers’ “Irish Cabin” site near the Carbon River entrance to Mount Rainier National Park was clogged with vehicles and shivering walkers and runners. The sun was shining, but it fell on the green mountainside across the river. The starting line was still in

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President’s Message

BY BUZZ GRANT, COALITION PRESIDENT

By the time this issue of the Trail Line News comes out, the Rainier to Ruston Relay and Ultra will be completed. What does it take to put on this 50-mile event from the Carbon River entrance of Mount Rainier National Park to near the town of Ruston on Commencement Bay? For starters, there are three committees of the Coalition that help out to make the event a success. The Race Committee consists of six to eight people, including Race Director Rob Hester, who are directly responsible for the race. They have a minimum of one meeting a month, and they meet more often as crunch times come.

The Work Party Committee led by Don Partington and the Courtesy Patrol led by Jerry Larson also help make this event a success.

The Race Committee starts meeting in November and works right up through race day and wrap up. Their monthly meetings are one to two hours each. They plan the race, the course (which varies year to year), set prices, get volunteers to set up, monitor and take down each of the 13 bell standards for the race, acquire all permits, insurance, as well as food and drink for the participants. If you don’t think that’s work, join them. They think it’s fun, but I am sure they would like your help.

The work parties this year started on February 20, and we were lucky. It was a great, sunny day, and
Tom Enlow
Certified Public Accountant

820 S. Lawrence St.
Tacoma, WA 98405
253.549.5860
tom@enlow.org
Loras Gassmann has been a member of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition since 1995 and a member of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy since 1985. In 2009 he became the treasurer of the Coalition.

Loras grew up in a small town of 150 folks near Dubuque, Iowa. He comes from a huge family, having 40 aunts and uncles and close to 150 first cousins. He attended business college and in 1967 joined Georgia-Pacific, working at plants in Monticello, IA, Sheboygan, WI and Olympia, WA. In 1996 he retired from G-P after 29 years. He got bored a year later and returned to work doing bookkeeping and managing a 110 unit condo in Olympia. Retiring for the second time in 2006 he moved to Sumner, WA to be with his partner, Carolyn. It was there that he became active with the Foothills Trail Coalition.

Loras has one daughter, Kara (married to Tom), and two granddaughters, Eva 5 and Adel 3, who live in Appleton, WI. He visits them and his family near Dubuque, IA on a regular basis.

Besides biking, one of his hobbies is geocaching, a high-tech treasure hunting game finding items that are hidden around the world using a GPS device and the internet. He and Carolyn enjoy traveling and finding geocaches in different states. Last fall they took an 8,200-mile geocaching trip through a number of states. They currently have 40 geocaches hidden in the Sumner-Puyallup area and 12 back in Iowa.

Currently Loras is working on some cemetery transcription projects in Iowa, photographing and recording the stones and posting the information on-line. The Coalition is lucky to have him as our treasurer.
it was 58° outside. We had six people, and we worked in Gale Canyon. The next work party was May 1 in the Carbon River Canyon from the Manley-Moore Bridge to Carbonado. There were 13 Coalition members, five members of the Backcountry Horsemen and two mules, Speedy and Big Jen, in this working party. They cleared trail from 7 am to 3 pm. On May 15 there was another work party of 12 in Gale Canyon between Wilkeson and Lower Burnett. The work parties generally use a riding lawn mower and trailer, weed eaters, sometimes chainsaws, loppers, shovels and other hand tools to clear the trail and overhanging branches and such. Generally, the same people show up for work parties, but remember, the more the merrier. We do have work parties throughout the year to maintain other parts of our trail system. To join us see the Coalition web site for dates and locations.

The Courtesy Patrol helps out by patrolling the trail during the event and assisting runners and walkers. They ride the full length of the race to help make sure all runners and walkers are accounted for, which is a very important job.

We are a volunteer organization, so if you have time to volunteer for the Courtesy Patrol, work parties or the 2011 Rainier to Ruston, please check our web site.

The bottom line is this: these events require a lot of support, and I would like to thank all of you who helped by volunteering your time and effort as well as those who competed in the Rainier to Ruston as participants. Have a great summer.

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“\[\text{The best way to predict the future is to invent it.}\]
- Alan Kay, U.S. computer scientist, 1940 - .
were also a people walk, a doggie walk and games along the trail. It was just an all-out fun and fit time with free T-shirts and healthy food distributed to all winners and participants. The Police Explorers were on hand to help as was the Foothills Trail Coalition Courtesy Patrol and kids from Korum YMCA.

What began as a dream of Senator Jim Kastama for branding the City of Puyallup as a “family fitness” city inspired him to put his money where his mouth was. Jim’s generous donation of $1,000 to the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition for funding a couple of simple one-table events on the Riverwalk and the Foothills Trail led to the appointment of Ernie Bay “Mr. Trail” as chair of the planned event by Coalition President Buzz Grant and the Board of Directors.

Never gainsay the power of partnering. Healthy Communities of Pierce County, with Dr. Jane Moore at the helm, and Friends of the Riverwalk, newly founded by Bob and Diane Kastama, and Ernie Bay joined in the effort. When Dee Spooner, Wellness Coordinator for the City of Puyallup, passed the word about the event to her co-workers, things REALLY started to happen. The citizens of Puyallup are fortunate indeed to have such talented, creative people willing to help and provide the professional guidance required to put on a public event.

To put it succinctly, the city staffers saved our cookies. It was a wonderful and well-learned lesson for us in the timing and preparation it takes to put on such an event. A special “thank-you” to Goodwill Industries for allowing us to set up in its spacious parking lot, and to the following:

Supporters: City of Puyallup Parks & Recreation and Planning Departments; Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition; Friends of the Riverwalk; Bicycle/Recycle; Healthy Communities of Pierce County; Share & Care House; City of Puyallup Library; ForeverGreen Council; Franciscan Health; and the Puyallup New Car Dealers Association for its generous donation of a beautiful Friends of the Riverwalk banner and $100, with a special thanks to Michele Ingle, Bill Korum and Dave Campbell.

City of Puyallup Mentors: Lona Graves, Dee Spooner, Dick Weber, Glenda Carino, Nancy Eckland, and Tim Parham and the supervisors who encouraged them to help us.

CJ Brewer Wins Grand Prize at Families in Motion

Five-year-old CJ Brewer contemplates his grand prize win of a new bicycle and helmet (donated by the South Hill Wal-Mart) with his delighted mother and older brother Scott. CJ found the lucky “Treasure Egg” along the trail at Puyallup’s first “Families in Motion” event on the Puyallup Riverwalk.

CJ Brewer and friends celebrate his winning the grand prize in the treasure egg hunt held as part of “Families in Motion” on the Puyallup Riverwalk, Saturday, May 22. CJ’s older brother, Scott looks on and flashes the V for Victory sign. CJ’s win was even sweeter since Scott had recently received a new bicycle as a present.
Networking for Trails:

Chambers-Leach Creek Trail

by David Swindale, Planning Manager, University Place

The City of University Place is preparing to submit a proposal to Conservation Futures as well as a Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) grant to purchase the Tacoma School District Property at 56th and Alameda. This 15-acre property is located on Leach Creek and the future Chambers-Leach Creek Trail corridor. About 75% of the property is wetlands. The remainder of the property can be used for active recreation and a possible trail head. Please offer your support to these proposals.

In addition, the city is in the process of obtaining a dedicated trail corridor between Hess Park (Office of Tahoma Audubon) and Morrison Park, a recent wetland park acquired with Conservation Futures dollars. The owners of the property where the trail will be located are developing a plat elsewhere in the city and need more amenity points to qualify for a density incentive. The trail corridor dedication will become a condition of approval for that plat.

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

Recipients of special recognition awards include: Jim Stevenson of Bonney Lake Bicycle in Sumner, as a bicycle technology special session trainer; Bob Rowan, for his stellar photography in class and out on the trail; Ron Downing, Pierce County unit of Washington State Outdoor Horsemen, speaker for the equestrian session training; Rob Hester, for speaking on endurance running in the Rainier to Ruston Relay; John Benedetti and the High Cedars Golf Club staff for exceptional service in supporting trail building and the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition; and Dottie Selby, the gal with guts and grit, who was the star of the final session and took us all along via a stunning slide show on the 300-mile bike trip she and John took down California’s Big Sur Coast and back up the Central Valley.

The fifth annual Courtesy Patrol certification class begins in January 2011 and continues through May. If you are interested in becoming a Courtesy Patroller, please contact me at (253) 845-7219 or e-mail captain2wheeler@comcast.net.

Courtesy Patrol Graduates Members

by Jerry Larson, Courtesy Patrol Chair

Twenty-three members of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition received completion certificates from the “Courtesy Patrol University” in May at Orting’s High Cedars Golf Club. The Courtesy Patrol is an all-volunteer group within the Foothills Trail Coalition that provides information and help to trail users along the Pierce County trail systems. The Courtesy Patrol, in bright yellow/lime vests, is also a presence at many special events throughout the county.


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Friday 18 August 2023

222 East 26th Street, No. 202, Tacoma, Washington 98421
Fax (253) 627-6661
Tel (253) 627-7947
www.bdassociates.com
bdees@bdassociates.com

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
the shade, but nonetheless the setting was beautiful. With a megaphone, race starter Selby warned that “Runners can walk, but walkers can’t run.” He also reminded them that the second leg of the route would be isolated and very rough trail, but should anyone sprain an ankle or break a leg, a steady mule named Speedy would serve as an ambulance.

At 7:30, Selby counted down and rang the bell. Fifty-two 50-mile ultra runners and eight solo walkers took off, punching their wristwatch timers. At 8:00, five walking relay teams set out to cover the 27 miles to Orting and 29 running relay teams headed for the finish on Puget Sound 50 miles away. At 8:30, the bell rang again for the start of 50 relay teams of six runners. By 10:00, everybody was on the course, including 23 ultras running 50 kilometers (31 miles) from So. Prairie to Ruston Way.

When the runners and walkers reached the South Prairie end of the Foothills Trail, they had to share the path with lots of cyclists, joggers, rollerbladers, babystrollers and dogwalkers out to make the most of a lovely day. No collisions were reported. In fact, no participant injuries worse than a few skinned knees and lots of foot blisters were incurred for the day. Soggy running shoes and muddy legs were plentiful, thanks to big and unavoidable mud puddles that covered the course in places. That’s all part of the R2R challenge.

At 2:35 p.m., Tyler Baker, 27, a teacher-in-training from Scappoose, Ore., was the first 50-mile ultra to ring the final bell at Marine Park on Ruston Way, logging a time of 7:05 (8:30 per mile) despite serious cramping that forced him to walk a good bit. “Potatoes and salt saved my life,” he said of the trailside snacks that kept ultra runners going all day. Baker said he would be back next year to “redeem myself” and go for the course record, 6:19 set by Phil Kochik in 2006.

Jen Segger, an accomplished ultra runner from Squamish, B.C., was the first 50K finisher. The top 50-mile relay team was the Fleet Feet Fantastic Four, a Pierce County masters team of Steve Stoyles, Daryl Montgomery, Tim Campbell and Mickey Allen, ages 49 to 54. As it happens, Fleet Feet Sports in Bonney Lake was a major event sponsor, but the foursome earned their awards -- “golden” railroad spikes -- fair and square.

Everyone who rang the finish-line bell was a winner -- even Alberto Gullaba, a military-division 50-mile ultra who limped in around 8:30 p.m., winning the “Last Man Standing” award after 13 long hours on the course, and proving that our soldiers never give up. When the day was over, one new course record had been set and eight old records broken.

The thrill of accomplishment at the finish line was contagious. Entrants and spectators alike cheered. It was hard not to be moved when waiting members of relay teams linked hands with their last runners to cross the line together, arms raised in triumph. Or when exhausted ultra runners wearily shook their fists in victory before collapsing on the grass. The essence of R2R is personal -- taking on a tough challenge and proving yourself. Founder Selby had the pleasure of watching his five-year-old grand nephew Kallen, run the last 50 yards and across the finish line with his mom. But a far greater satisfaction was seeing the R2R -- staged to celebrate National Trails Day and promote the Foothills Trail -- have its best day yet. Selby saluted event directors Hester and Barnes, who are putting the R2R on the map for the region’s serious relay and ultra runners, as well as the scores of volunteers who helped make the R2R a success. In particular, he singled out longtime Foothills Trail Coalition member Don Partington, who won this year’s Founders Award for organizing numerous, volunteer work parties to prepare the trail for the race.

At day’s end, Selby repeated what he had said at the starting line in the morning: “I’m just having so much fun seeing so many people having so much fun!”

A happy Katie Kindle finishes for six-runner relay team Swift Six by ringing the bell at Marine Park on Ruston Way. Photo by Byron Vasecka.

Three Selby’s - 5 year old Kallen, Susan and John - members of the Tarahumara Wannabees. Photo by Byron Vasecka.
Photos by: Byron Vasecka and Jim Reed
Calendar of Events

Meetings:

Monthly Board Meetings:
Open to all members and are generally held on the 4th Thursday from 7-9 p.m. at the Puyallup Public Library, south entrance. Monthly meetings may be rescheduled, so check our website at www.piercecountytrails.org for changes.

Weekly Meetings:
Informal luncheons 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.

Courtesy Patrol Meetings:
Scheduled on 2nd Saturdays of each month at High Cedars Golf Course, 149th St. Ct. E., 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. Contact Jerry Larson at 253-845-7219 or Capt2Wheeler@comcast.net.

Friends of the Riverwalk:
We are an informal group of volunteers devoted to the enjoyment and betterment of the Puyallup Riverwalk. Please join us for breakfast on most Monday mornings* at 9:00 a.m. at Mrs. Turner’s Restaurant, 701 E. Main, Puyallup.
*call prior to confirm in case of cancellation.
Ernie Bay 253-848-7718 bugtrail@aol.com
Bob Kastama 253-435-1637 kastamaq@gmail.com
Puyallup City Parks 253-841-5447

Washington State Trails Coalition Biennial Meeting: October 22-24, 2010
Details at http://www.washingtonstatetrailcoalition.org/index.html Hosted by the Foothills Trail Coalition and ForeverGreen. If you would like to help in planning, contact Ernie Bay at 253-273-5449.

Events:

Work Parties: Generally held on Saturdays as announced by email. Call Don Partington at 253-863-5307 to get on his distribution list or email him at cedarfamily@comcast.net. For work party details please visit our website at http://www.piercecountytrails.org/events.php.

Engle’s Backyard Potluck, June 24, 6-9 p.m.
Displays by Pierce County outdoor and environmental allies: Audubon, Mountaineers, Foothills Trail Coalition, Native Plant Society, Cascade Land Conservancy, Sierra Club, Citizens for A Healthy Bay, Carbon River Corridor, Chambers-Clover Watershed Council, Puget Creek Restoration Society, Student Conservation Association and more. At the Engle Garden, 4011 Alameda Avenue, University Place south of Fircrest. We furnish: Coffee & punch. Beer and wine is BYO. You bring: A hot or cold entree, plus a salad or dessert, plus your own table service and a ‘situpon.’ No RSVP necessary. Rain does not cancel. Helen Engle, 253-564-3112, hengle@iinet.com (e-mail preferred).
220 Bikes go to Happy End Users from BicycleRecycle

**BY JERRY LARSON, BICYCLERECYCLE PRESIDENT**

According to Richard and Joanie Harrelson, 220 refurbished bicycles have gone to needy users since the inception of BicycleRecycle in 2009. The Harrels are both Courtesy Parkers. Richard is the lead bicycle mechanic for BicycleRecycle and Joanie handles the placing of refurbished bicycles. She reported that users have received bicycles as far away as central Oregon, the Canadian border and Eastern Washington with the majority being placed in the Puyallup area, eventually to be seen on the Foothills and other Pierce County trails.

The mission of BicycleRecycle is to provide refurbished bicycles to the less fortunate at no charge. We do ask for donations of approximately half the bicycle’s current value from those who can afford it in order to recover expenses for fuel and parts while keeping the bikes from the crusher and the landfill. BicycleRecycle is not a registered non-profit but nevertheless operates as a break-even organization.

The Coalition is a sponsor of BicycleRecycle. Without their help it would be difficult for us to cover costs.

Continued on page 13

A Day on the Riverwalk

**BY ERNIE BAY, COALITION PRESIDENT EMERITUS**

“Do you have any counts for people using the Puyallup Riverwalk?” The question came from Tim Parham, a planner for the City of Puyallup, who was seeking data to market the city’s vision for redeveloping the River Road business corridor. As part of its commute reduction plan, Puyallup wants to replace vacant auto dealerships with multi-residence construction and reorient this and existing and future commercial enterprises to face upon the river with better access to the Riverwalk. I explained that what counts we had were out of date and offered to conduct a day-long physical survey to serve as a “snapshot of current trail activity.”

On April 4, a clear cool Saturday, Dixie Gatchel, Ernie Bay, Ken Woolery and Clive Berglund set up shop on the Puyallup Riverwalk just east of the Meridian Street Bridge where we recorded 221 passers-by between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Among these, 94 people were stopped and interviewed about their means of accessing the trail, frequency of use and trail activity. The location, north of Tiffany’s SkateInn, was selected for its connection between the northeast Puyallup residential neighborhoods and major shopping centers.

While 80% of persons interviewed were local residents, including Sumner, Edgewood and Fife, some were visitors from as far away as Oregon and Alaska. Other visitors had travelled from Parkland, Spanaway, Graham, Orting, Bonney Lake, Federal Way, Tacoma and Lacey. Most people had either walked (44%) or bicycled (24%) to use the trail while others (36%) had parked mostly at local shopping centers. These figures establish the Riverwalk as both a valuable neighborhood convenience and a tourist destination trail.

Frequency of trail use was divided equally among those who used it at least daily, weekly, or only on occasion. Nearly all cited exercise, including dog walking, as their primary use of the trail while a third cited shopping or dining.

A statistic of particular interest was that while 74% were aware that a second section of the trail exists between SR 512 and Sumner, only 13% of these had experienced it. This fact highlights the importance of completing the missing connection between where the Riverwalk now ends at 5th St. NE and begins again beneath the SR 512 overpass.

Other survey findings were that male and female users were about equally divided (115 vs. 91), and that single males (67) outnumbered single females (36) almost two to one. Walkers, bicyclists, runners and skaters broke down in descending order (104, 83, 17, 7) with 20% of walkers accompanied by dogs. People using the trail on that Saturday ranged in age from less than ten (4) to more than eighty (2) years, with the majority (111) falling between thirty and sixty.

While this survey is merely a snapshot of trail use along the Puyallup Riverwalk, it does provide a useful profile as to the age, gender, origin, frequency of use and specific activities of trail visitors. If we had more help and been able to continue our survey, we likely would have doubled our total count. It has been our experience that evening use on the Riverwalk is commonly greater than during the day.

We intend to conduct future surveys and invite you to join us. If you are interested, please call Ernie Bay at 253-848-7718.
TWBC Government Affairs Report

by Bob Myrick, Tacoma Wheemen Bicycle Club and Coalition Member

Our committee met May 4 at the Harvester Restaurant in the Stadium District.
Ralph discussed a situation where WSDOT had listed property near the Narrows Bridge, Gig Harbor side, as surplus to the State’s needs. This property had been thought to be a part of a future trailhead and connection. Fortunately, through the efforts of a lot of people acting quickly, the Peninsula Park District will be able to buy the property for future use.

Tacoma’s draft mobility plan is moving through the Planning Commission and City Council and will be presented to the Council in early June. You can follow the city meetings on their website. The city has a $500,000 grant to provide improvements when the plan is approved. Part of the grant ($100,000) is reserved for promoting pedestrian and cyclist activity within the city.

Carla and I have been attending public meetings in Orting to find solutions to cyclists who disregard the stop signs along the Foothills Trail. We also want to work on motorists improving their behavior as well. The city’s Public Safety Committee is the venue for discussing these matters. The worst problem seems to be when workers commute home in the evening. The offending cyclists apparently don’t turn their heads to look back to see if cars are about to turn right. Some cyclists see a car coming and try and beat it to the intersection. If you are on the trail, please check for cars and act appropriately. Also, please be very careful when overtaking slower cyclists or pedestrians.

The TWBC is participating in the Washington State Trails Coalition Conference scheduled for late October in Tacoma. We plan to sponsor several walks, mostly emphasizing the Esplanade along the Thea Foss Waterway as well as at least two bike rides, one on the Foothills Trail and one on the Narrows Bridge and Cushman Trail.

This summer, the City of Tacoma will be working on a short trail connection between Skyline and Vassault just north of SR16. Dana Brown and Diane Wiatr (from the City) have worked this project along with WSDOT who provided the easement and funds to accomplish the work.

Ralph reminded us that Pierce County Parks was supposed to have a meeting or two to prioritize potential trail projects in their new comprehensive plan. We have since contacted the Parks people and asked them to facilitate these meetings.

Remember to ride more and worry less.

NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

South Prairie Mayor, Peggy Levesque, is looking for a race director for the South Prairie Salmon Run. This traditional, late September event on the Foothills Trail offers 5 and 10K runs, 3 and 5K walks, a kids’ fun run, and a community salmon bake all rolled into one. If you are interested in helping two local volunteers with this event, please contact Peggy at pplevesque@comcast.net or 360-897-8253.

Would you like to read the TLN in full color?
If you would prefer to receive your copy of the Trail Line News by email, just let me know. I will take you off our snail mail list and put you on an email delivery list for your TLN in PDF (You will need Acrobat Reader). Besides reading it in full color (on your screen or off your printer), you will receive it about two weeks earlier. The news will be more current, you can search for words or phrases, you can click on links to websites or email addresses, you can forward copies to friends, and you will save your Coalition about $1 in printing and mailing costs for every copy. If half our membership did it, we would save about $2500 per year, money that we could spend on trails instead. Sound good? Email me at FTCeditor@gmail.com.
Letters to the Editor

Editor’s note: this letter was first sent to Orting Councilmember Sam Colorossi.

For too long our community has had to endure unruly, disrespectful cyclists. I am not referring to kids being kids; I’m referring to those who are disrespectful of “common sense” laws designed to protect the public. We teach our children to “look both ways before crossing the street” because it is a wise and safe thing to do. I am completely baffled by the behavior of cyclists on the trail as it endangers themselves and drivers alike. Having some kind of barrier at the crossing points may be out of the question due to the need for handicap accessibility as well as room for horses and riders. Perhaps the city engineer could review other municipalities for their solutions to similar problems. I know we as a community have a problem that needs to be addressed before someone is seriously injured. Nobody wants to see that happen.

Best regards,

Bill Wilkinson

Active Transportation Report

Active Transportation Report

by Dixie Gatchel, Coalition AT Coordinator

To the trail lovers of Pierce County: Now hear this! Do you want a fair share of Federal Surface Transportation funding for trails? If so, act now for ACT, Active Community Transportation Act of 2010. As introduced by Congressman Earl Blumenauer of Oregon in March, ACT establishes a competitive two-billion-dollar active transportation investment fund within the Surface Transportation Program. ACT enables communities to build interconnected systems, allowing people to travel between places they work, live, play, learn and shop without needing a car, or, at least, leaving it in the garage for short trips. ACT has 57 co-sponsors so far, including Washington State Congressmen Jay Inslee (D-WA) and Jim McDermott (D-WA). Unfortunately, the names of three Congressmen with constituencies in Pierce County do not appear as co-sponsors: Norm Dicks (LD6); Dave Reichert (LD8); and Adam Smith (LD9). Please phone, write or e-mail your congressman today and convince him to invest in walking and biking improvements in your community by co-sponsoring the ACT act.

The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is hosting the Washington State Trail Coalition’s biennial conference in Tacoma at the LaQuinta Hotel on Oct. 22-23. Lisa Goorjian, Regional Trail Planner for Vancouver-Clark County, and I are coordinating the Track II Program for Active Transportation, which comprises three sessions: Making the Case for Active Transportation, Partnering for Power and Finding the Funding for Trails. I’m excited by our progress on the program which will be final by the middle of June. Do Tacoma and environs proud and participate in this important event by contacting Ernie Bay, chair of the host committee, or me. Ernie is looking for a few more sponsors for the fun events planned.

After over 2 ½ years of making the grassroots case for the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy’s Active Transportation Campaign 2010, I’m convinced that the best, or perhaps only, way non-motorized, public trails will receive sufficient funding is by linking their importance to surface transportation as well as to recreation. The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition with its case statement for building a “Pierce County Active Transportation Regional Network” is well positioned to be one of the communities selected for funding. This is also true for stimulus funding. Building active transportation infrastructure creates as many, if not more, jobs than road or highway construction. Investments in walking and bicycling can increase vitality, livability, home values, safety and physical activity. Additional benefits are reductions of greenhouse gas emissions, oil dependency, air pollution and obesity.

Don’t forget to call your Congressman today and implore him to co-sponsor the ACT act.

Happy Trails and Peace out Y’all!

What is Active Transportation?

AT = +  +  +  + You
Ed’s Alaska Sailing Adventure Fundraiser for the Foothills Rails-To-Trails Coalition

BY ED DAVIS, BOARD MEMBER

[Editor’s note: Ed Davis departed on his sailboat, Odyssey, in May for an adventure sailing trip to Alaska. Information from Ed is below on how to keep up with his adventures and support the Coalition at the same time.]

Last summer I enjoyed my solo sailing trip around Vancouver Island on Odyssey. I asked friends, family and associates for pledges to the Ocean Conservancy, and as a reward I sent emails to all that pledged (when service was available) of my exploits along the way.

So this year as I sail to Alaska I’m sending emails to all that pledge at least $25 to the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition. I’ll email at least once a week stories about my adventure - of what I see, experience, enjoy, etc. If time permits, I will email up to three or more messages each week.

The trip will take about three months, possibly a few weeks more, meaning 30 to 35 emails will be sent to those who have pledged supporting the Coalition. I will send back issues of my emails to all who pledge after I depart.

Your donation is tax deductible. Make your check payable to the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition, P. O. Box 192, Puyallup, WA 98371 and indicate that it is for Ed’s Fundraiser to be used for Courtesy Patrol, BicycleRecycle, work parties, Kastama’s Trail Education Program, or the general fund. Include your email address and email a copy to Ed at odysseyed@gmail.com and to my gracious volunteer coordinator of this fundraiser, Dixie Gatchel at gatcheldb@msn.com.

I need to stress that I will not be able to send emails on a daily basis, as service will not be available in many areas on my way to and from Alaska. However, I plan on writing adventure reports at least every other day and sending them when service is available. My reports will describe my experiences (fishing, crabbing, beach combing, kayaking) and adventures (running rapids, sighting wildlife, visiting cities, hiking exploits, etc.) as the trip progresses from Tacoma to Alaska and back.

Please join me for my sailing adventure trip and generously support your Coalition!

Here’s an excerpt from Ed’s Adventures on June 4:

I spotted what I thought was a seal swimming across the channel ahead of my bow. As I got closer, I realized it wasn’t a small seal, but maybe a sea lion, as the head was much bigger. We (Odyssey and I) haven’t seen many sea lions or seals so far on the trip. Normally as you get close they dive down, but this one didn’t and upon closer observation, it had a hairy head and I thought might be a big dog. Then I realized it was a brown wolf swimming. The wolf was large and really going strong. I completely circled the wolf in Odyssey and wished him farewell before we continued on north.

A while later Scottie and Kelly, just ahead of me in their sloop Happy Camper pointed out a whale off their starboard bow. A few minutes later, the whale surfaced beside me going south and did its normal diving with the tail in the air. What a nice surprise, as the whale was very close between me and the shore, only a few hundred feet away.

BICYCLETYCLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

the cost of our insurance. Another invaluable donor is Steven Bennett of J&J Brothers who provides the garage facilities where as many as 50 bicycles are in process.

In addition to thanking all the individual donors of bicycles, we profoundly thank the following organizations for helping us get to where we are today: the Foothills Trail Coalition and the Tacoma Wheelmen Bicycle Club for their grants; LRI Landfill/Pierce County Recycling, Composting and Disposal for their endless supply of discarded bicycles; and the following bicycle shops for donating bikes and parts - Spoke & Sprocket, Biketech and Bonney Lake Bike of Sumner.

Make a deserving bike rider very happy and healthy this summer by donating a salvageable bike. Contact Capt2wheeler@comcast.net to make arrangements.
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Membership makes a difference! The work we are doing is made possible because of your generous support. Credit cards accepted.

Membership Levels:
- $20 Single
- $30 Family
- $50 Pathfinder
- $100 Trail Builder
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