R2R Holds Special Meaning

BY DAVID SEAGO, COALITION BOARD MEMBER

Gina Chupka started the Boston Marathon on April 15, 2013, but never got the chance to complete her goal of running a marathon in all 50 states. Terrorism got in the way.

But Chupka, a chemist from Golden, Colorado, pounded 50 miles of trail, pavement and mud in the 2013 Rainier-to-Ruston Ultra and Relay (R2R) on June 1st to accomplish another feat: Her first ultra.

Boston will have to wait another year, but Chupka’s run was a top highlight of the 11th Annual R2R on June 1st, National Trails Day. This year’s event attracted 994 entrants and a record 93 ultra runners.

There were no cheering crowds when Chupka crossed the finish line on Tacoma’s Ruston Way. In fact, her day’s journey from the foothills of Mount Rainier to Commencement Bay took nearly 12 hours.

She struggled across the finish line only eight minutes before the race was to officially shut down at 7 p.m. When race director Richard Pasquier put the finisher’s medal around her neck and handed her the ceremonial railroad spike, she broke into tears and embraced Pasquier with a crushing hug.

As she regained her breath, she told Pasquier her husband and parents had been waiting for her in a Boston restaurant when one of the explosions showered them with glass.

“It was quite an accomplishment for her, and quite the emotional experience,” Pasquier recalled later. Chupka, whose age is “over 35,” now has done 53 marathons in 49 states. Last year she ran 24 marathons in 24 states.

Pasquier, directing his first R2R, told another story that captures the

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is a marvelous organization that has done outstanding work improving and obtaining trails throughout the South Puget Sound Region.

I am a member of Valley Cities, an organization of the cities of Fife, Puyallup, Sumner, Algona, Pacific, Kent, Renton, Tukwila and Auburn. Our cities are located in the White, Green and Puyallup river valleys and we are the largest warehouse, distribution and manufacturing center in the Northwest; second largest on the west coast and fourth largest in the nation.

But our Valley cities are also host to a regional, and perhaps national treasure. Our cities are connected by the Interurban Trail from Seattle to Pacific. We are also at the trailhead of the Foothills Trail, which is just a few missing links away from Puyallup’s Riverwalk Trail. From our perspective we have been working for more than a decade on a tri-trail connection and the few missing pieces to join these trail segments together are all in Pierce County. (By-the-way, you may not be aware that a portion of the City of Auburn is in Pierce County.)

Can you imagine the legacy that we can leave by combining these trail segments? From Tacoma to Mt. Rainier and to Seattle, a person would be able to ride a bike, walk or jog throughout our region. It’s a dream that can happen if we work together. Therefore, I invite members of the Foothills Rails-To-Trails Coalition to meet with Valley Cities to consider working jointly toward that goal to benefit generations to come.

Sincerely,

Pete Lewis, Mayor
City of Auburn

The letter below was received by Art Robinson from Dupont, WA.
Meet Your Board Member

Steve Brown has been involved with the Foothills Trail since 1988 and served on the Coalition Board for the past few years. Growing up in the college town of Corvallis, Oregon, Steve observed a community that often put trails, open space, pedestrians and bicyclists above the need of trying to move more cars faster. He is also a member of the Tacoma Wheelmen Bicycle Club and a toastmaster club in Federal Way.

Steve has had the opportunity to see many of our nation’s and western Canada’s great trail systems. Many years ago, he bicycled five days on the Kettle Valley Rail Trail near Penticton, British Columbia. In 2006, Steve bicycled the C & O Canal Trail near Washington DC. In 2009, he completed his first major solo bicycle tour riding from Tacoma to Portland along the Seattle to Portland route, then east along the Columbia River for a few days, and finally back to Tacoma via Trout Lake and Randle.

Steve believes regional trail priorities should include a paved path between Buckley and South Prairie to allow public access to bridges the Coalition worked to complete many years ago. Also, connecting the Sumner Trail system to the Interurban Trail, in King County, and Buckley to Enumclaw will expand local trails into a regional system connecting most of the major cities.

Outside our local region, Steve would like to see the railroad trestle over the Columbia River, south of Vantage near the town of Beverly re-decked for hikers, bikers and equestrians to allow a safer way east along the John Wayne Trail (Old Milwaukie Rail corridor).

Steve’s next trail adventure will most likely be checking out the Cowichan Valley Trail located on Vancouver Island near the town of Duncan.

ForeverGreen Council

BY DR. JANE MOORE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At the March 2013 board meeting, the ForeverGreen Council’s Board voted to change the name of the organization to ForeverGreen Trails to better reflect the purpose of the organization.

Mark your calendars now for the 2013 Pierce County Trails Conference hosted by ForeverGreen Trails. The conference will be held on Wednesday, October 30, 2013, at the Pierce County Environmental Services Building – the same location as last year. The time, format, and speakers for the conference are still to be determined. The event will most likely be in late afternoon and/or early evening.

If you have ideas or suggestions for the conference or if you or someone you know would like to be a sponsor or have a display at the conference, please let us know. It’s easiest to contact me by email – janemoore.jm@gmail.com.
essence of the R2R. Driving home long after the end of the race, volunteer John Downs spotted two women runners slowly making their way toward Ruston Way. He alerted Pasquier, who had already stopped in his car to give two other late finishers their medals and spikes.

The two women were the Bondar sisters, Linda and Janice, 59 and 62 years old. They were stunned and immensely grateful to find Pasquier waiting with medals and spikes when they reached the finish at 8:52 p.m.

By all accounts, the 2013 R2R was a great success. The weather was excellent, there were no reports of serious injury, and the addition of a beer garden at the finish line was hugely popular. Every ultra runner was treated to a free beer.

A team from Sumner won the first ‘Mayor’s Cup’ in a relay competition among cities on the route. Allen Hughes won the ‘Founder’s Award’ for organizing effective radio communications along the race route.

The worst glitch was a computer problem that prevented accurate time results. Pasquier vowed he would make sure that this won’t happen next year. The results were posted two days later on the R2R website.

Pasquier praised the work of more than 125 volunteers. “They really pulled through to make it all happen,” he said.

Pasquier is already at work planning the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition’s second half-marathon from Buckley to Orting to be held on July 27, 2013. Those wishing to participate in the half-marathon may do so by visiting the following Website to sign up: http://www.rainiertoruston.com/FoothillsBOHalf.html

Networking for Trails:

Foothills Trail - South Prairie
by Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition (Facebook)

Good News! Kudos to the Pierce County Council Members who on June 4, 2013, unanimously passed a resolution needed for funding to move forward with purchase of the Foothills Trail right-of-way through the Partin trailer park in South Prairie. And a special Thanks to our Pierce County Parks Director Kathy Kravit-Smith who can now retire happily after accomplishing one of her primary goals. Thank you, Kathy.

Bonney Lake Trail
by Gary Leaf, Facilities and special Projects Manager, City of Bonney Lake

Construction has begun on a one-mile trail in Bonney Lake. Part of this will be a porous trail along Fennel Creek and part will be a gravel trail up a steep hill to Victor Falls Elementary School. Funding is being shared between United States Department of Transportation, Washington State Department of Transportation, and the City of Bonney Lake. The trail is expected to be complete by the end of this August.
Antique Railroad Signal

BY CHUCK MORRISON (FORMER FOOTHILLS COALITION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/BOARD MEMBER)

An antique railroad ‘wigwag’ signal has been procured for placement in Buckley where the Foothills Trail crosses Main Street. In fact, the unit obtained was manufactured in Los Angeles and originally posted in the Glendale/Pasadena area. This brand of signal was also posted along the Northern Pacific lines here in the northwest.

The effort to post the signal in Buckley has been revived here in 2013 after a frustrating lull due to numerous causes. In short, love and persistence on the part of many individuals will be required to “make it so.”

As with many things like the Foothills Trail itself, it will not get done without committed participation. Good ideas do not just happen because other people do all the work. We are those other people.

For those who may have questions about this project or who would like to become involved please contact Mr. Chuck Morrison at chuckmorrison@harbornet.com or Coalition President Buzz Grant at railroadbuzz@comcast.net.

Editor’s Note: There is a story behind this article by Chuck Morrison that I would like to share which some of us, a few or possibly many, may not be aware. Chuck hunted down an essential piece needed to make the wigwag signal work, a motorbox, from a boxcar storage unit in Lake Placid, New York. According to Chuck, George Sleet designed and built a plywood box for shipping the unit to the Northwest and Earl Micklesson arranged the trucking. The motorbox was refurbished in the San Francisco Bay area, in 2000, before arriving in our area. Morrison is also quick to credit George and Earl with working out the details for the rest of structure and others for their helping with this effort.

As of today, Chuck advised, the wigwag signal is almost completely ready to install onsite in the city of Buckley. The signal would be a focal point of a 20 x 76 foot, rail-trail themed plaza, to include a baggage car, actual sections of 1912 vintage Northern Pacific track, a bronze replica of Doctor Douglas Tait’s house call bag. Doctor Douglas Tait was a long time supporter of rails to trails conversion who played an integral part in getting the effort started in the Buckley area prior to his passing and the plaza would be dedicated to him.

While there have been challenges along the way Chuck believes the time is right with the spirit of volunteer-driven efforts from within the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition and Buckley communities, for the dedication of the wigwag signal to finally become a reality 10 years after Dr. Tait passed away.
Several TWBC members attended an event to hear Diane Wiatr, Planner/Mobility Coordinator for the City of Tacoma, provide updates on coming improvements for bicyclists. She advised the city is going to create a complete street with ‘bike lanes’ on Mildred Street between South 12th and 19th Streets, adjacent to Tacoma Community College. Diane said a million dollar grant has been secured for general improvements and will be used to complete a 13-mile bikeway from Tacoma’s North End to the south city limits on Park Avenue. This bikeway will have bike lanes, sharrows, and directional signage all aimed at making it safer.

Diane announced the first segment of the Tacoma Pipeline Trail would be opened the morning of May 30, 2013. This is a short segment in the Salishan neighborhood running from East 48th Street to South 56th Street. East 48th Street has bike lanes to McKinley Avenue. I believe it is also past time to start lobbying Tacoma Water to work with the city in paving the trail at least within the Tacoma City Limits.

Diane also indicated Ruston Way will be shutdown on September 22, 2013, for a community wide event to celebrate opening of the Ruston Way Trail into Point Defiance Park. I understand there will be a temporary steep trail using a truck haul road and that the Metropolitan Park District has funding to create an ADA compatible trail as well.

The new trail in Swan Creek Park is ready to use thanks to Metro Parks and the Evergreen Mountain Bike Coalition. This trail can be accessed just off of South 56th Street. There has also been early talk regarding creating trails on city and state property generally under Interstate 5 and State Route 7 near the Tacoma Dome, Freighthouse Square, and Tacoma Rail property.

I hope you get out and ride now that the May rains are over (Hopefully). I will be heading to Markleeville, California, for a week and later to Ashland, Oregon for a week of happy riding. My understanding is there may also be a July trip to Paradise, so get ready.

The next TWBC Government Affairs meeting will be the first Tuesday of the month at the Harvester Restaurant in the Stadium District at First and Tacoma Avenues. Start time is 6p.m.
Memberships/Donations

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

Abbott, James
Adair, Gene, Alan & Eloise
Arnold, Bob & Mariella
BERRYLAND CAFÉ
Buonadonna, Victor & Mary Jane
Carter, Doug & Kathie
CASCADE WATER ALLIANCE
Clark, Rose
Dimmitt, Greg & Trish
Fetterly, Lloyd P. & Patricia C.
Jorgensen, Wayne J.
Kalapus, Caroly & Len
Kastama, Bob & Diane
Lindblad, Randolph M.
Mahr, Bill & Theresa
Meshke, Beth & David
Moore, Jane & Hugh
Peach, Cheryl
REPUBLIC MORTAGE
Strait, Viora
Torgerson, Susan

“Some succeed because they are destined to; most succeed because they are determined to.”
Anatole France

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 first or more accurately than any other response received, you will win a one-year individual membership renewal. Amazingly, for a second time no one even tried to guess the location of the photo in the last issue. It was of the artwork on a bridge support under SR512 along the Puyallup Riverwalk. Let’s see if you can do better this time. Please respond with your answer to “Where is this?” under the adjacent photo to John Selby at JohnSelby16@gmail.com. Good luck! The winner will be announced in the next issue.

“Solitude is as needful to the imagination as society is wholesome for the character.”
- James Russell Lowell, US poet, essayist, and diplomat, 1819-91
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 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.

Charlie Chat - Weekly Luncheon:
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: (Note: no meetings in July or August.)
Scheduled on 2nd Saturday 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 Mariella Arnold at RAArnold@aol.com.

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 9 a.m. at Mrs. Turner’s Restaurant, 701 East Main, Puyallup.
*call prior to confirm in case of cancellation. Ernie Bay (253)-848-7718, bugtrail@aol.com. or Bob Kastama 253-435-1637, kastamaq@gmail.com, Puyallup City Parks 253-841-5447

Events:

Work Parties RSVP to Don Partington at 253-820-8411 or cedarfamily@comcast.net

B&O Half Manathon July 27 in Buckley. More information at rainiertoruston.com
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 communities in building, maintaining, and promoting a network of safe, non-motorized trails that provide healthy recreation and transportation options.

Charge my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard CCV (3-digit number) Exp.______
No: ____________________________
Name: __________________________
Address: _________________________
City: __________________ Zip: ________
Phone: ______ Signature:__________
Email: __________________________
The Foothills Trail is one of Pierce County’s true gems. It has been a work in progress for over 3 decades, and remains underfunded and unfinished. This calendar is a reminder that this Trail continues to grace our communities. Buy a calendar. Become a member and support YOUR Trail to completion. We can finish this wonderful public space for our generation and years beyond.

All photography © 2013 Bob Rowan and Vince Streano
The mission of the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition is to assist Pierce County communities in building, maintaining, and promoting a network of safe, non-motorized trails that provide healthy recreation and transportation options.

The cost of one calendar is $15. Two to four calendars are $12.50 each. Five or more calendars are $10.

(All costs are a donation and include shipping and handling)

Membership Makes a Difference!

☐ $20 Single
☐ $30 Family
☐ $50 Pathfinder *
☐ $100 Trail Builder *
☐ $200 Corporate (Includes a 1 year ad in the Trail Line News) *
* Includes a free calendar

Please e-mail my newsletter to ________________________

Charge my  ☐ VISA  ☐ MASTERCARD  CCV 3 DIGIT NUMBER

No.______________________ Exp. ____________

Name: __________________________

Address: _________________________

City: __________________________  Zip: ____________

Phone: _________________________

E-mail: _________________________

Signature: ________________________

Mark your categories, mail form and check to:
Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition P.O. Box 192,
Puyallup, WA 98371-0021