Rainier-to-Ruston Rail-Trail Relay

by Dave Seago

“What a great day!”—That was what just about everyone who ran, volunteered, cheered, watched or had anything at all to do with the 17th annual Rainier-to-Ruston Rail-Trail Relay (R2R) event on June 1 had to say on a day that was full of sunshine and superlatives.

Except, perhaps, for the unfortunate female runner who was bitten by a dog during a late stage of the 53-mile race “from Tahoma to Tacoma.”

The injury wasn’t serious, only a minor blemish on what turned out to be a record-breaking day.

R2R founder and Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition board member John Selby, who doubles as the race’s (very tall) Sasquatch mascot, and race director Sabrina Seher were both astounded when nearly 2,000 entrants signed up for this year’s event. That was 33 percent more than last year’s record-setting total.

“Oh my, it was fabulous,” Seher enthused. “This was the best yet.”

When R2R planners saw in the spring that pre-race registrations were running strongly ahead of last year’s pace, they decided to divide the field of 376 relay teams and 12 solo runners into 5 timed waves beginning an hour earlier at 6am, instead of 4 waves. Parking for the runners’ support vehicles

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President’s Message
by Buzz Grant, Coalition President

Editor’s Note: For those of you that may not know, longtime coalition president Buzz Grant passed away in April at 72 years of age. Buzz will be honored at an upcoming Celebration of Life and the following is a message from his daughter (Tami):

Hello,

The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition and Buzz’s family would like you to join us on Friday, June 21, 2019 for Buzz’s Celebration of Life and his passion for The Foothills Trail. The celebration will be from 6pm to 8:30 pm at the Southern end of the Orting City Park. The Trail will be generously providing food, but as we all know Dad loved potlucks so this being his celebration please feel free to bring a dish to share as we take a moment to remember, reminisce, and enjoy a little piece of the Trail that was Dad’s passion. Please save the date and join us as we celebrate his life as the season transitions from Spring into Summer on the longest day of the year, the Summer Solstice.

When Dad first started work on the Trail he told us that he was doing it to leave a legacy of open space to his grandchildren and beyond. What a legacy he left! Dad was able to do something very few of us are able to accomplish by combining his enthusiasm for his career in title insurance and maps, his love of steam locomotives, engines, and railroads, into an organization that enabled him to exercise not only his

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 9**
New Pierce County Parks and Recreation Trail Coordinator

BY KIMBERLY FREEMAN, PIERCE COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION - RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP SUPERINTENDENT

Please help welcome Brianne Blackburn who is the new Trail Coordinator with Pierce County Parks and Recreation. Brianne is joining Pierce County from Alaska where she spent 12 years working in Natural Resource Management and Planning for both the State and local Borough (County) Government. She has a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences from Western Washington University and a Master’s Degree in Project Management from the University of Alaska Anchorage. Brianne and her family (husband, daughter, new baby boy, and dog) just moved to the area and are excited to settle into Pierce County. Brianne can be reached at 253-798-4261 or brianne.blackburn@piercecountywa.gov.
Hopes & Happenings Along the Tahoma to Tacoma Trail

by Dixie Gatchel, Active Transportation Coordinator

Think we can rest on our laurels now that the spine of our Foothills Trail is completed for 21 beautiful miles between Buckley and East Puyallup? No way! Our battle cry is “Onward” - Let’s finish the trail from South Prairie to Tacoma’s Point Defiance Park on Puget Sound. Serendipitously, the stars have suddenly aligned that portend success to that effort eventually as follows:

The Carbon River Forum: Meets quarterly in the Wilkeson Town Hall with the goal of determining how to care for their shared public parklands in a way that allows for a range of uses while at the same time ensuring the conservation of natural, cultural and recreational values allow for sustainable economic growth. At the 03/12/19 quarterly meeting Roxanne Miles, Director Pierce County Parks & Recreation, introduced the Carbon River Planning Project which creates a concept plan for a coordinated park and trail system through the Carbon River Corridor, involving multiple landowners and outdoor recreation stakeholders. Roxanne asked that attendees write letters of support for a planned grant application to the NPS, Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). The grant is designed to provide RTCA expertise to Pierce County Parks in the way of professional services and keep them needing to hire a planner/consultant at a budget cost of $250,000 for each year. Kudos to Roxanne for initiating the plan and to Carbon River Forum President Mardel Chovan and Forterra Project Coordinator Jordan Rash for their leadership. Mailing address: Rivers & Trails Conservation Assistance Program, Attn: Ms Barbara Rice, NPS Pacific West Region, 333 Bush St., Suite 500, San Francisco, CA 94104. PWR_RTCA@nps.gov.

Tacoma to Puyallup Regional Trail Connection

Route Analysis: The Puyallup Watershed Initiative’s Active Transportation of Interest (PWI-AT-COI) has been in collaboration with an impressive group of cohorts working to identify three potential alignments as possibilities for further study. Possible routes include State Route 167; Levee Road Alignment; and the River Road Alignment. Presently, there is no safe route between downtown Tacoma and Puyallup for people on foot or on wheels in this heavy traffic impacted area. A trail would provide safe access to public transportation for people throughout Puget Sound. A big shout out to co-leaders of the study Liz Kaster, PWI AT-COI Manager, and Kristina Walker, CEO, Tacoma Downtown on the Go. I have volunteered with these ladies for over five years and they have demonstrated strong leadership and success in getting the most difficult jobs done. https://altaplanning.com/wp-content/uploads/Tahoma-to-Tacoma-Trail-Benefit-Report.pdf

The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition: Will continue close collaboration with Pierce County Parks & Recreation, Carbon River Forum and Puyallup Watershed Initiative AT-COI as we share common goals for trails and parks. As I write this our volunteers are out setting up the course for the 17th Rainier to Ruston Relay (R2R) held annually on Nationals Trails Day. We can take pride in the fact that our volunteers not only forged the first pathway through the wilderness but also has helped maintain it with in-kind labor and monetary support for over 32 years. Check the R2R course out as a preview of the future Tahoma to Tacoma trail route at www.rainiertoruston.com.

In closing, words are inadequate for expressing the gratitude we have in our hearts for those impassioned trail

Continued on Page 9
ForeverGreen Trails Report
by Dr. Jane Moore, Executive Director, ForeverGreen Trails

ForeverGreen Trails primary event for trail promotion is Pierce County Trails Day on July 27, 2019. We have about 20 events lined up for this year’s celebration. Pierce County Parks & Recreation is organizing events and displays along the Foothills Trail at the East Puyallup Trailhead and the Orting Park. There will also be a bike ride along the trail from Buckley to South Prairie. Promotional materials and posts on social media should start by late May. It’s never too late to add an event, so if you have an idea, let us know. Events added after mid-May may not appear on printed promotional materials.

The ForeverGreen Trails Board met in January for their annual planning session. They drafted an ambitious work plan for the year which was approved at the February board meeting.

The Board confirmed our vision of “a countywide system of trails connecting all of Pierce County’s communities. The system links sidewalks, bike lanes, and local pathways into an integrated network for safe, convenient, non-motorized travel and recreation. The system is valued, used, and cared for by local residents and contributes to the livability and economy of Pierce County.” The ForeverGreen Trails mission is to “support a countywide system of trails through education, advocacy, promotion, collaboration, and stewardship.”

Our education activities include, as usual, the Pierce County Trails Conference in the fall. We will continue to host Trails & Ales as part of Bike Month in May. Our website will be adding information and links; we hope for it to become a clearinghouse for trails-related information.

For our advocacy work, we will continue to offer Speak Up for Trails – Local Government 101 trainings. We will also be developing an Advocacy section of our website with resources and information on each jurisdiction in Pierce County. We will be working with Tacoma’s ‘Downtown On the Go!’ to train active transportation champions through hosting Transportation Advocacy Day and a Short Course in Local Planning focused on transportation issues.

ForeverGreen Trails collaborates with other groups through joint activities and supports agencies and jurisdictions in updating trails plans and seeking funding for projects. We welcome opportunities to work with other groups.

Finally, we have a tool kit available to help groups or organizations start stewardship programs and can provide technical assistance in establishing those programs.

If you are interested in additional information, check our web page www.forevergreentrails.org or follow us on Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/ForeverGreenTrails/. You can also contact Executive Director, Jane Moore at forevergreentrails@gmail.com.
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 accurately describe the location of the photo below before anyone else does, you will win a one-year individual membership renewal. (Sorry, board members are excluded.)

The photo in the March issue was of the bridge over Clark’s Creek in DeCoursey Park. Bob Rowan guessed it first. Congratulations, Bob! You know your PC trails!

Let’s see how well members 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.

If you don’t know your Pierce County trails well enough to guess, then get out there and explore them! You are missing out!

All Along The Riverwalk - May 2020

by Carolyn Warhol, Friends of the Riverwalk

The Friends of the Puyallup Riverwalk are in the midst of planning for an event in the spring of 2020. Local artists, young and old, will display their work on a section of the Puyallup Riverwalk Trail along with a variety of other kinds of entertainment. Non-profit groups will have booths set up and there will be some surprises along the trail to keep everyone entertained. This will all happen on the section of trail between Veterans Park and Fred Meyer in Puyallup. Please mark your calendars for May 9, 2020 and more information will be forthcoming as the planning continues!
was scarcer than ever around the remote starting area near the Carbon River entrance to Mount Rainier National Park.

Parking wasn’t the only challenge, Selby reported. The Honey Buckets ordered for the starting area arrived only 15 minutes before the 6am start. Unable to enter the designate staging area, the Honey Bucket crew had to drop off units wherever it could.

“Lots of runners were walking around with their thighs pinched and looking into the woods for relief,” Selby noted. “We postponed the start time by 15 minutes to allow runners to do their business, then sent them off into the beautiful morning light.”

With that, the first runners set off to meet their Leg 2 teammates at an old wooden logging bridge across the Carbon River, deep in the forest near Fairfax. A well-known hallmark of the R2R, Leg 2 leads runners across the river and down a rough, isolated but beautiful trail about six miles toward the historic railroad and mining town of Carbonado.

For safety, a volunteer team from the Backcountry Horsemen took two pack mules and a horse carrying emergency medical gear on the trail, and medics from Graham Fire and Rescue established a landing spot should a helicopter evacuation be necessary.

This was only one example of the volunteer support it takes to pull off a successful R2R. Scores of Coalition members and other friends of the trail directed runners, set up the event’s signature railroad-style bell stands at relay exchanges, patrolled the course and helped out at the finish line at Tacoma's Marine Park on Ruston Way.

Volunteers also helped fill and carry sandbags to protect a portion of the stream along Leg 4 in forested Gale Canyon between Carbonado and South Prairie. Long a favorite part of the course for runners, the undeveloped trail in the canyon has been closed in recent years due to a major washout. In another milestone for the R2R, runners were able to cruise into South Prairie on the newest paved section of the Foothills Trail, completed just last year.

Notably and sadly missing among the Coalition volunteers this year was longtime Coalition President Buzz Grant, who died in April at 72 years of age. Buzz, who made advocating for the trail his life’s mission, and fellow board member Don Partington usually led the team delivering and setting up the bell stands along the route. Buzz, often driving a tractor, was an inspirational mainstay on trail work parties even in failing health.

A new team took over the task this year, but Buzz’s presence was still felt. “Buzz’s soul lit up every time the bell was rung,” Seher said.

For the record, the winning relay team was expectantly named New Course Record. The six-man squad from Puyallup lived up to its name, finishing in a record time of five hours and 13 minutes, more than 51 minutes ahead of the second-place team. Members included Liam and Colin Monaghan, Nate Segers, Hunter Vilhauer and Samuel Zielke.

In the restored ultra division for solo runners doing the entire course, Blake Hilty of Seattle won in a little less than six hours and 48 minutes.

The R2R is held on National Trails Day, the first Saturday in June. It was established by the Coalition to promote its vision of building a safe, non-motorized trail from Mount Rainier to Commencement Bay. Over the years the R2R has raised thousands of dollars to benefit the county-owned Foothills Trail, which now extends from Puyallup to Buckley, and to boost other efforts to complete a countywide network of trails.

After packing his Sasquatch suit away for another year, Selby marveled at how the R2R has grown since it began with just a handful of friends and relatives. The event’s growing popularity may pose new logistical challenges — such as timely delivery of even more Honey Buckets.

But that’s not a worry, Selby said, trotting out his favorite R2R slogan. “It’s always so much fun to see so many people have so much fun.”
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 Rainer to Puget Sound. The following people and organizations have renewed their memberships or made a donation between February 1, 2019 - April 2019.

**New Members:**
Bret & Dawn Bellevue  
Curt Brown  
Patrick Grant  
Kelly & Kevin Loney

**Donations from Businesses:**
ANYTIME FITNESS of BUCKLEY  
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SPOONER FARMS, INC.  
TOYOTA of PUYALLUP  
WALLY’S WHITE RIVER DRIVE-IN

**Donations from Individuals:**
Adair, Gene Alan & Eloise  
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Anderson, Jim  
Angeline, Vernon E  
Aymonin, Audrey Lynn  
Bailey, Eleanor  
Marlene’s Market & Deli  
Beerman, Paula  
Bellevue, Bret & Dawn  
Bickel, Daniel & Leah  
Bridges, Paulette  
Brown, Curt  
Brown, Jack & Billee  
Bulley, Charles - Lauren  
Buonadonna, Victor & Mary Jane  
Carter, Doug & Kathie  
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Cooper, Heather L.  
Corbin, Leroy H  
Corrado, Cathy  
Corry, David  
Coulbourn, George  
Coulter, Richard & Kay  
Crest, Joseph  
Croshaw, Joann Merrill & Wally  
Degroot, Pat & Dave  
Denzler, John  
Dobb & Family Mike & Marcy  
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Dovey, James & Margaret  
Downs, John & Theresa  
Dryfoos, Michael  
Elliott, Gene  
Erath, Lois M. & Gary J.  
Ettlinger, MD Robert  
Flood, Wayne  
Forslund, Jeff D. & Cathy T.  
Fredrickson, Gary & Margie  
Gard, Lori  
Garrivone, J. S.  
Gassmann, Loras & Carolyn-Pasquie  
Gatchel, Dixie  
Gilbertson, B. K.  
Grant, Patrick  
Griffin, Alexander J  
Grimm, Dave  
Grubenhoff, Richard D,  
Hagoski, Steven A.  
Halpin, Jim & Julie  
Harriss, Greg & Susan  
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Higgins, Edward & Diana  
Hildding, John Emil  
Hokenstad, Alan J. & Marion  
Hopkins, John  
Hughes, Donald & Dalwyn  
Johnson, Bertil & Nancy  
Johnson, Kirk & Pat  
Kindle, Jeff & Sue  
Klickitat Trail Conservancy  
Klingman, Kurt  
Knudson, Martha J.Scoville, Gary R.  
Kogle, Mark & Marty  
Kokko, David Y.  
Kraft, Ret Msg Brian L. & Janice  
Krainick, Leann & Mike  
Kray, Jeff & Debbie  
Larsen, Bob & Florence  
Larson, Michael Jarvis & Craig  
Larson, & Family Richard T.  
Latham, William  
Mahr, Bill & Theresa  
Marsee, Don & Jill  
Martin, Bruce & Helen  
Mc Caskie, Ray  
Mc Guire, Joseph & Alberta  
Mc Intyre, Wayne & Carmen  
Mikkelsen, Earl & Glory  
Mish, Cindy  
Naylor, Jesse & Debra  
Nicholsons Sumner Pharmacy  
Nix, Roger & Viengkham  
Oberlander, James A.  
Okeson, Joanne  
Olexick, Nancy & Rick  
Olsen, Walter & Martha
I love running because it’s the one thing I do every day and never regret.
-Katie Mackey

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President’s Message Continued from page 1

mind, but body and spirit while touching countless numbers of people with his kind ways and determination to “See the Trail to the Mountain.” Although he did not see the Trail make it to the Mountain, he left behind a group of dedicated people that not only share his vision and true friendship, they will be seeing the Trail into the future and to the Mountain for him. Although his physical presence has moved beyond our grasp, his passion for the Trail and people will be a physical reminder to us all, I hope, of his genuine love of the people he encountered along his journey through this life and his determination to leave open space and the natural beauty of Puget’s Sound that he loved so much, to many generations to come.

My family and I would be honored if you would join us in celebrating Buzz’s life and a change of season for us all.

Tami

Active Transportation Continued from page 3

champions, no longer with us, who persevered with purpose to overcome the obstacles and build our dream trail. A multitude of “thanks” with much love to: Dr. Douglas Tait; Ernie Bay; Stan Engle; Bill Harmon, Clay Gatchel; George Sleet; Bob and Diane Kastama; and most recently, our beloved President Buzz Grant. I like to think they are all volunteering up on that Happy Trail in the Universe keeping it tidy (as Bob K. used to say). Onward! Let’s complete the trail!

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I love running because it’s the one thing I do every day and never regret.
-Katie Mackey

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Windermere Real Estate
Calendar of Events

**Monthly Board Meetings:**
Open to all members and are generally held on the 4th Thursday of each month from 6:30-8:30 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.

**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, 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.

**Plateau Trails Coalition**
We are a group of volunteers devoted to the enjoyment and betterment of trials. Please join us on the first Thursday of each month at 630 pm at the Justice & Municipal Building, 9002 Main St E, Bonney Lake, WA 98391. *Please email prior to confirm any changes or cancellation at ptcchairperson@gmail.com

**ForeverGreen Trail Events**
July 27: Pierce County Trails Day. All day multiple events & locations
October 17: Pierce County Trails Conference 4pm to 8pm location TBD

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

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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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