Stewards of the Trail
An Interview with Tom Faubion
BY BOB ROWAN, EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER, TRAIL LINE NEWS

Introduction by John Selby, R2R founder

The Rainier to Ruston Rail-Trail Relay (R2R), has become a welcome source of income for the Foothills Trail Coalition. The contributions of this event along with donations received from our memberships have allowed us to support numerous trail projects over the years! The R2R has truly become “An Adventure in Your Own Backyard” for its participants, drawing attention to the Foothills Trail and its potential for completing a non-motorized route from Tahoma to Tacoma. In addition to the financial income and many positives that have been gleaned from the R2R, we have been fortunate to get a helping hand from many Coalition volunteers doing tasks that only they can do.

An excellent example of this is Tom Faubion and The Back Country Horsemen. They have been involved in three ways. They have maintained the rough, isolated trail between Fairfax (Manley Moore) and the Fairfax Bridge above Carbonado. This work is critical to the race. It is substantial, as the approximately four mile stretch of trail is often subject to windfalls, slides and washouts. The Back Country Horsemen have provided emergency radio communication in the upper Carbon River valley during the event; an area where cell phone coverage does not exist. In addition, they station a rescue party near the middle of that section of trail to assist any injured runner. Although we have never had a runner sprain or break an ankle on that section of trail, it could easily happen as the surface is very rough with rocks and...
A Great Supporter of the Foothills Trail, Fred Hart, passed recently on May 1 at the age of 90

By Bill Hilton, Editor

Whenever discussions about the beginning of the Foothills Trail come up they usually involve the names of Dr. Douglas Tait and Fred Hart. Right now some of our members, much like me a year ago, may be wondering who Fred Hart was and his connection to getting the Foothills Trail started.

Well, maybe the following information can help with this question by traveling back in time.

Trail Line News (March 2006):
“In 1983, when Dr. Douglas Tait and Fred Hart began their quest to transform a section of abandoned Burlington Northern Rail Road into a trail, there were few precedents within the State of Washington. In fact, the newly formed Rails-to-Trails Conservancy could only identify 134 such trails within the entire nation. Today our state can boast 62 operating rail trails, totaling 617 miles, and 45 known projects in progress. Today there are rail trails in virtually every state except Hawaii for a total of 1,402 open trails, totaling 13,567 miles. In addition, according to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy there are 1,196 trails either planned or under development which, when completed, will add another 14,147 miles. It is now quite common for many bicycle and trail enthusiasts to chart their cross country vacations by the locations of trails in

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ForeverGreen Trails Report

By Jane Moore, Executive Director

The 2020 Pierce County Trails Conference will be held on September 30 from 2:00 until 4:00 PM. It will be online due to the COVID pandemic and to help make it more accessible to participants. This year’s theme is “Trails for All: Equity, Access, & Inclusion,” and we will be joined by staff from Alta Planning + Design, Wendy Brown, the Recreation and Conservation Office’s Policy Director, as well as staff from the Washington Trails Association’s Inclusion Program to explore these issues. We will also be introducing a new effort to support trails through a Community Assessment program that we will need your help as trail advocates in launching. As usual, we will also include an update on trail projects around the county as well as trail awards recognizing outstanding achievements. Final details for the Trails Conference are still being determined as of writing this article, but updated information can be found on our website at www.forevergreentrails.org.

The Conference will also mark a significant change in ForeverGreen’s staff leadership. I will be stepping down as the Director of ForeverGreen Trails at the end of September. I have served in this capacity for nine years, with additional service as a board member and officer before then, since 2006. I first joined the board because of my interest in healthy, active lifestyles as a competitive swimmer and a medical doctor. Throughout my tenure as Director, I am particularly proud of ForeverGreen’s work in expanding communications and connections among jurisdictions and increasing knowledge of the many benefits of trails. My love of trails is of course undiminished. In fact, I want to finally enjoy my retirement and experience more trails all over the country with my husband!

The position of Executive Director for our organization will be filled by Larry Leveen, who has served as our Program and Communications Coordinator for the last two years. Larry joined us having a significant amount of experience in land use and transportation planning and advocacy at the local and state levels as well as a background in recreation as well. Our board unanimously approved his hire, commencing on October 1st of this year.

I will continue to be involved in trails and ForeverGreen in the future — after enjoying some travel and relaxation of my retirement. I had looked forward to seeing you all at the Trails Conference in person, but unfortunately it was not to be. I hope you will still attend, however, from the comfort and safety of your own homes, and help us celebrate and support not only trails, but trails for all through just equity, access, and inclusion.
roots. Speedy the mule was always stationed with the rescue crew to carry out an injured runner should that happen. They even prepared a landing spot on the dry riverbed in the event of an injured runner who needed to be evacuated via helicopter.

One of the team leaders is Tom Faubion, with his special group of Back Country Horseman who have given of their time and expertise. Two of these are Tom’s adult children, Andy and Jenny. Over the years, we have thanked them and presented them the R2R Founder’s Award for their efforts. But their participation goes well beyond what many other groups can do. For that we thank Tom Faubion and his team, once again.

BR: When did you get involved with the Foothills Trail and what was your motivation for doing so?

TF: We began working on the Foothills Trail on a section between Orting and South Prairie. We were convinced by John Jensen to provide support in volunteer labor.

BR: What has your profession been; and has that impacted your involvement with the Trail?

TF: I am an attorney practicing in Pierce County. The main impact of my profession has been meeting Buzz Grant. He was a Title Officer who was the officer researching all aspects of railroad law.

BR: Your mule, Speedy, has also played a dynamic role in your efforts. What is her role?

TF: Speedy has been involved since our first projects. She carries tools, materials, and any necessary parts for trail work that are too heavy for volunteers. With her 2 partners, Jenny and Parker, she carries into leg 2 of the R2R, the paramedic equipment to establish an emergency medical location. Speedy has been the equine mascot of the event and has a red blanket, emblazoned with R2R on it.

BR: What do you feel is the value of having rails-to-trails in communities such as ours?

TF: Access to the trails provides wholesome activities for all citizens. There is no need for a gym membership: just a desire to hike in a safe environment.

BR: There is a plan underway to have continuous rails to trails from the east coast to the west coast. What are your thoughts on that and when do you think it might be completed?

TF: No thoughts about a Coast to Coast Trail, other than “good idea.”

BR: There are those who still believe that spending tax dollars on trails is a waste of resources. How would you respond to that concept?

TF: Accessible hiking trails provide extensive health benefits to all who use them. Increasing trail mileage and improving quality expands the benefits throughout the community. The use of tax dollars for that purpose is a tangible benefit to all tax payers.

BR: Over the next generation, what do you see the future holds for trails in communities (large and small) in Washington and around the US?

TF: I hope future generations will appreciate and support community trails and expand them wherever possible.

BR: You have been very involved in the R2R Rail-Trail Continued on Page 5 & 6
Tom Faubion, his 2 adult children, grandchildren, and dozens of volunteers over the last several years have played a significant role in the R2R. The 50 plus miles of the course has a lot of very rough terrain that necessitates more work and planning than most runners and other volunteers would expect. Much of the work is carried out before the event, but the day of the event has its own skilled group of volunteers, including The Back Country Horsemen.
Relay. Why are events such as the R2R and B&Q important to the communities along the Foothills Trail?

**TF:** Aside from the financial benefits the R2R brings to the communities, it gives a lot of people a concrete connection to the trail. The number of people running in the relay has annually increased. Last year 2371 runners registered. This is exposure to the trail and to trail-side communities that would be unavailable without the R2R.

**BR:** Should trails be regulated by the communities they serve or by State governance?

**TF:** The trail needs to be under one government entity. Presently, that is Pierce County and it has worked well. Individual community regulation would be much more difficult to maintain consistency. The area of Gale Canyon desperately needs County support and improvement to stop the river from damaging the trail. It is a priceless crown jewel of the County and is in danger of being destroyed.

**BR:** What is your favorite place on the Foothills Trail and why?

**TF:** My favorite part of the trail is the upper Carbon, from Manley-Moore/Kolish Bridge to the Gray Gate at Carbonado. During the hot days of summer there is no more welcoming area than along the Carbon River.

**BR:** Can you share some information about the Back Country Horsemen?

**TF:** The Back Country Horsemen has been involved from the beginning. John Jensen was involved with the initial planning and lobbied for equine access to all of the trail. The Back Country Horsemen provide Emergency Medical Services throughout leg two of the R2R. Without them there would be no access to that leg. Back Country Horsemen crews established and maintain the section between Carbonado and Kolish Bridge. They also assist where they are requested, throughout Gale Canyon.

**BR:** Your adult children have also been involved with the Foothills Trail. Why?

**TF:** Both of my children, Andy and Jenny, have grown up working on the trails with their father and friends. Now, their children (my grandchildren) are working with us as needed. They enjoy the volunteer work and the good feelings of contributing to the Trail.
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 June issue was taken on the Nathan Chapman Trail. It was correctly recognized by Bruce Robie. Congratulations, Bruce! You know your Pierce County trails. 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. If you don’t know your Pierce County trails well enough to guess, then get out there and explore them! You are missing out!

Fred Hart Continued from Page 2

the various states. What a way to go!” — Ernie Bay, Past President, Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition.

Tacoma News Tribune (January 29, 1987):

The article by Lori Steinhauer titled, “County Oks ‘Rails to Trails scheme’ begins, “Despite opposition from affected property owners, Pierce County will begin acquiring property for a proposed 25-mile paved trail from McMillin and Buckley to Carbonado.” The article goes on to say that the Pierce County Council took the first step at starting to obtain property offered as gifts or purchased in order to construct the trail. The article is an interesting read but how does Fred Hart fit in? The last few sentences provide an answer, “By the end of the meeting, council members learned that they had at least one parcel of land that their decision would allow them to acquire. ‘I’d be honored to be the first to be able to donate to this purpose,’ said Fred Hart, a South Prairie resident with property along the proposed trail.” In other words Fred was involved early on and often, even donating property to help get the Foothills Trail started.

Over the years Fred also took part in a number of the annual Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition auction and dinner events.

Most recently (2020) an obituary page was set up for Fred on the Curnow Funeral Home website and is filled with many kind words about him. As a grandfa-
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 in 2020.

Gene Alan & Eloise Adair
John & Becky Aldrich
Heidi & Jerry Althauser
Jim Anderson
Mary & Dennis Anderson
Vernon E Angeline
Bob & Mariella Arnold
Joel and Laura Attaway
Richard Autio
Audrey Lynn Aymonin
Eleanor Bailey
Roddi Barton
Marlene's Market & Deli
John Becker
John Ernest Berry III
Daniel & Leah Bickel
Ron & Vicki O'Keefe Book
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James & Margaret Dovey
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Gerry & Terry Fabre
Sylvia Feder
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Foothills Historical Society
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FRED MEYER REWARDS
PROGRAM
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Mark & Marty Kogle
Thomas and Mary Koon
Jerry Korum
Ret Msg Brian L. & Janice Kraft
Leann & Mike Krainick

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Carbon River Corridor to Develop a Cooperative Action Plan

By Larry Leveen, ForeverGreen Trails Project & Communications Coordinator

Pierce County Parks Department (PCPD) is reaching out to landowners, community members, local businesses and recreational groups interested in the future of the Carbon River Corridor to develop a Cooperative Action Plan. The focus of this plan will be improving visitor experiences and developing new recreational amenities while preserving and protecting the cultural, historic and environmental assets of this area. The planning area ranges from the Town of Wilkeson to Mount Rainier National Parks’ Carbon River entrance. This area includes tens of thousands of acres of publicly-and privately-owned land, residential and commercial development, historic resources, critical habitats, and of course, some of the best recreational opportunities in the area.

The project has experienced a few early successes. In June, Pierce County Parks, in partnership with the Town of Wilkeson, constructed a ‘wayfinding’ kiosk at the Wilkeson Town Hall to inform people about the planning effort and current recreational opportunities along the corridor. Two surveys were also deployed this summer to track the needs and interests of residents, visitors, and stakeholders. Over 1,000 people took the online resident and visitor survey. Almost 40 stakeholder groups, including the Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition, were invited to take a separate survey to help PCPD understand how stakeholder groups are currently using lands within the planning area as well as plans or suggestions they have for future opportunities.

With this public outreach phase coming to a close, a consulting firm, EnviroIssues, has been hired to map land ownership in the study area and to interview landowners and key stakeholders to gather input which will help form the Cooperative Action Plan. A draft of the plan is expected by February 2021 for public review and feedback. Implementation strategies will be fold-ed into the plan during summer 2021 and will include a plan for cooperative management and investment toward the agreed-upon improvements. The last steps in the process will be adoption of the plan by all parties by September 2021 and movement toward aligning efforts and resources in the corridor over the next decade.

Of particular interest to the trails community is the opportunity to advocate for extending the regional trail system an additional 20 plus miles all the way to Mount Rainier National Park. This project will formalize an alignment for the Foothills National Recreation Trail. Members of the trails community will need to work together to make their voices heard and their needs known throughout this process to ensure investments are made to see this dream become reality!
Yelm Prairie Line Trail Update

BY BRYAN BOWDEN, BOARD MEMBER

The Foothills Rails-to-Trail Coalition (represented by Bryan Bowden) is participating on an advisory committee in a ‘pre-planning’ project to explore the interests and needs of various jurisdictions, stakeholders and community groups in developing a trail from Yelm to Roy along the former Prairie Line railroad. The end product will be a written report called a ‘Concept Plan’ that documents: 1) the current conditions; 2) the interests, needs, opportunities and constraints of the project; 3) a project vision and goals; and 4) recommendations for next steps.

This is not a project of any government agency. Rather it was initiated by the non-profit ‘ForeverGreen Trails’ as an important first step to study the potential for developing this trail via an inclusive, collaborative and public process. ForeverGreen Trails applied for and received a non-financial planning grant from the National Park Services’ Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program to assist in conducting the project. Agency participants on the advisory committee include representatives from the cities of Yelm and Roy, Pierce and Thurston counties, JBLM, and the Washington State Department of Transportation. Many other advisory committee members represent various non-profit groups, businesses and adjacent landowners.

The historic Prairie Line Railroad used to extend from Kalama on the Columbia River to downtown Tacoma. In fact, the Tacoma ‘Prairie Line Trail’ was developed along a section of this former railroad. Some sections of the Prairie Line Railroad are still in active status, but other sections have been abandoned or preserved as a corridor for trail use via rail banking such as the Yelm-Tenino trail that is owned and managed by Thurston County. The City of Yelm owns a 4.8-mile section of this historic railroad right-of-way extending from Yelm into Pierce County near the City of Roy. Hopefully, this effort will produce a consensus-driven blueprint for the future development of the Yelm to Roy Prairie Line Trail.

For more information about the project, see https://www.forevergreentrails.org/yelm-prairie-line-trail or contact larryleveen@forevergreentrails.org.

President’s Message Continued from Page 1

The issue we are having is that someone(s) has been removing these markers. The fire department and emergency response agencies requested these plaques to help them find emergencies along the trail. The Foothills Coalition purchased the markers; Pierce County Parks and a local Boy Scout pack have been installing them, which is very time consuming.

If you see anyone disturbing these markers, please don’t confront them, just inform the local fire department, Pierce County Parks or The Foothills Coalition when and where it happened.

Thank you again for your support.
Memberships/Donations Continued from Page 8

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Store Hours
Sat-Sun: 9-6
M-F: 9-6

Pickup Hours
Sat-Sun: 9-5:30
M-F: 9-7:30
Calendar of Events

**Monthly Board Meetings:**
Monthly meetings are currently being held on Zoom. If interested in taking part, please contact Stuart Scheuerman by email at snese01@msn.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 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, billhln@aol.com, Puyallup City Parks 253-841-5447.

**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 6:30 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

**VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
The Foothills Coalition is looking for a new volunteer editor for its Trail Line Newsletter.

If you are interested or would like more information please contact Bill Hilton at (253) 302-1104 or ftceditor@gmail.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 1-year ad in Trail Line News)
- Please email my newsletter

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.


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