

PTC Newsletter Spring 2006

Annual Meeting

Every year in May the Peninsula Trails Coalition holds its annual meeting. This year's meeting will be Wednesday evening the 24th (next week) at the River Center in Railroad Bridge Park. The doors open around 6:30 with a social time of desserts, coffee and tea. The official meeting will run from 7-8PM.

We use this meeting as a time to let our members know what is happening and what will happen on the trail in both Jefferson and Clallam Counties. This year David Sullivan, Commissioner from Jefferson County, will bring us up to date on his end of the trail. Rich James from Clallam County will talk about the Adventure Trail currently being constructed west of the Elwha. And, Bill Sterling, the new parks director in Port Angeles, will talk about the trail as it runs through PA. Also on the schedule will be a short presentation from the Seattle-based Washington Trails Association. They are a volunteer organization that helps maintain trails in the park and on Forest Service land.

Railroad Bridge Park was the first project of the Peninsula Trails Coalition back in 1992 and it was the project that started the ball rolling on the Olympic Discovery Trail. If you haven't visited the park come early, grab some coffee and dessert and take a walk out on the bridge. It is 150 feet long and the trestle is 500' long.

To get to the River Center take the western-most exit off the bypass and follow the signs north past the big box stores to Hendrickson Road. Head west on Hendrickson to the park.

From the President...Chuck Preble

I want to express my admiration and appreciation to the PTC Board members for the way they have stepped up to keeping PTC running while I have been out of commission for the last 6 months. They are an exceptional group and I am honored to be able to work with them.

For me, it was a long, dark winter. I was diagnosed with throat cancer in November and spent December and January in Seattle getting daily radiation treatments and periodic chemotherapy at the Group Health Medical Center. The tumor was on the back of my tongue and was inoperable. My Doctors have apparently killed the tumor, but they almost killed me in the process. It hit my system so hard I was thrown into clinical depression, so I had another devil to fight. The last four months have been a slow process of healing and I am now free of the depression and almost back to normal. I'm still tube feeding as my tongue was traumatized and I am undergoing therapy to relearn how to swallow. I will be able to attend board meetings from now on and will begin to get reinvolved in trail projects.

I have been able to walk the new trail section through the Jimmycomelately estuary, and watch the construction start on the Hendrickson road section. Soon I will get out on the Adventure Trail to see the progress there. All incomplete sections between Blyn and Lake Crescent are in some stage of development. The next few years should see Clallam County and Port Angeles making significant extensions of the current trail east and west. And Jefferson County is close to doubling its existing trail length. Piece by piece our ODT is becoming real!

Real People

Larry and Nancy Lang are responsible for the Old Olympic Highway to Gasman Road section of the ODT.

We have had a love affair with Olympic National Park and the North Olympic Peninsula for a number of years, Larry as a recently retired Park Ranger and Nancy as an avid hiker and backpacker. We try to stay in shape by walking daily so after Larry retired we decided that, while walking we might as well pick-up litter and do a “good deed” at the same time.

It’s been rewarding in many ways. One such way was last year while I was undergoing chemotherapy for ovarian cancer. We continued our monthly litter pickup, got some exercise, fresh air and felt positive about what we were doing. We got to see the changing seasons with new growth in the springtime, full blooms in summer, fall colors and the quiet of winter.

Sometimes we are the only ones on our portion of the trail and open our ears and eyes to the birds, frogs and wonderful smells of the out of doors. Other times bicyclists, joggers or walkers will pass us by with a big thank-you; another reward.

We’ve been surprised by unexpected logging, parallel to the trail and by some people’s disregard for tossing their garbage be it old vehicles or beer bottles trashing an otherwise pristine setting.

All in all people who use the trail use it with care and appreciate the fact, as we do, of having the Olympic Discovery Trail in our own backyard.

Adopt-a-Trail’ers

We have some new trail adopters: Ben Chambers who is watching the section from Buchanan Drive to the Morse Creek bridge, Paul Beck who is helping Carleen Godwin with the portion from Gasman to Lake Farm Road and, Bob and Elaine Caldwell who

have taken on the new section from the Dungeness Bridge at RR Bridge Park to Sawmill Road.

Dues

This is the usual annoying plea for money-check your membership labels for the expiration date. You all know what that means.

Adventure Trail

(See Map Section)

The PTC and Clallam County's chain gang have been constructing a section of trail that is referred to as the Adventure Route. It is a section of trail that uses old logging roads and some newly constructed trail to run from Highway 112 where it crosses the Elwha River to the east end of the Spruce Railroad Trail. It will give hikers, horseback riders and mountain bikers an alternative to a busy section of Highway 101.

The trail is not complete and is ***not*** officially open however portions of the trail are complete and being used and we are getting questions about the trail. This is a section of DNR land that is riddled with logging roads and motorcycle trails and it is easy to get confused if you are out there. The blue and white ODT trail markers have been placed at the start of each segment but some have been disappeared so don't count on finding them. Here is the latest map.

Closing the Gap

Clallam County recently started construction on the last unfinished piece of trail between Sequim and Port Angeles-from Kendall Road just west of Sequim to Railroad Bridge Park on the Dungeness River. The trail will run along the north side of Hendrickson from Kendall to Priest, head south on Priest for about 300' and head west to the river on the old railroad grade. It should be complete by the middle of the summer. When this section is complete, the ODT from Sequim to Port Angeles will be complete except for a short stretch in Sequim from Carrie Blake Park to Sequim-Dungeness Way.

Jefferson County

Jefferson County is working on the master plan for the Cape George Trailhead also Ramage Property west of Highway 20. A parking lot has been constructed and one more public workshop is planned to come up with a "purpose and goals" for the property. The meeting will be sometime in June and notification will be in the newspaper. You can call the Jefferson County Department of Public Works to find out where and when for the

meeting (379-9160). The county has also applied for a construction grant to build trail from the Cape George Trailhead to Highway 20.

Volunteer Opportunities

We have plenty of fine volunteer opportunities for all of you who want to get involved with building the Olympic Discovery Trail. We have; a regular Thursday work crew (currently working on the Adventure route), a monthly work party that does a variety of things on the Second Saturday of each month and we periodically have openings in our Adopt-a-Trail Program to which we recently added Sequim. And we are always looking for people who are interested in working on the Board of the PTC. Look at our newly revised website (OlympicDiscoveryTrail.com) or contact us directly for more information.

From Another Satisfied Customer

We received the following from a Canadian couple who live on Vancouver Island.

Hello Cherie and Dave: thank you very much for the information you sent us earlier. It was most helpful in providing us with a most memorable experience cycling on Fidalgo, Whidbey Islands and the Olympic Peninsula. We did a leisurely 5 day tour staying in Oak Harbour, two nights at Fort Worden in the Hostel and one night in Sequim. We made it to Dungeness Spit. We loved the ODT - such luxury to have a paved trail. Loved the covered bridge and the man in the tree - many delightful surprises. I am returning in September with a group of women, we are doing a return trip to Sequim from PA along the ODT. Staying overnight in Sequim so we can do a bit of shopping in Doodlebugs and other shops. We hope the western stage of the trail will be completed while Len and I are still upright on our bikes.

Many thanks for your help!

Meri

Website

We have a spiffy new website thanks to Bob Selby, a recent arrival to the area, and a grant from the City of Port Angeles. Check it out olympicdiscoverytrail.com .