



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

JANUARY 1989

DONATIONS JUMP IN DECEMBER

December donations to our association were the highest of the year, \$2635, due in large part to a memorial gift of \$1500.

Our thanks to the following who contributed money, recyclables and/or services in December and have given permission to be listed here: Paul W. Ammons, Lorraine E. Barnes, Kenneth R. Avery, Harriet F. Davies, Janet R. Davis, John Gardner, Mrs. M.C. Haggin, Dr. R. Steven Heaps, Blanche Holsten, Marion E. Krauss, Jack/Alice Malone, Bettie Maron, Joan L. Nolan, Ambrose Priestley, Bonnie/Oren Randles, Hazel Richard, Tom Rogers Jr., Tom Rogers Sr., Donna M. Smith, Marcia F. Spohn, William K. Steele, Larry Thiemann and Susan P. Virnig. If you aren't listed here but should be, please let us know. Thanks again!

1988 WAS A GOOD YEAR

At our annual meeting January 17 all current officers and members of the board of directors were reelected. 1988 was a good one financially. Rounded off figures showed a total income of \$12,485 and operating costs of \$2688 for net income of \$9,186, of which \$2,404 was from recycling. Payments of principal and interest for the 140 acre addition came to \$17,929 (by drawing down our reserve fund), leaving \$9,239 to be paid. Our cash balance at the year's end was \$15,989. Why don't we pay off the balance owed on the land now? Our board decided that we should keep a reserve in case more land adjacent to what we now have becomes available for purchase. (The buying of the 140 acre addition would not have been possible had we not accumulated such a reserve fund.) We're moving right along, thanks to you loyal supporters!

(continued from column 2)

No naturally caused fires have been known to start in the Hills since at least 1957--all have been human-caused--though there have been lightning strikes that did not catch. A policy should be established as to whether such fires, if they occur, should be extinguished or allowed to burn, preventing too much accumulation of dead wood that could fuel a holocaust later. The Yellowstone Park fire sparked much controversy over this point but the public appears to be coming to an understanding that the big fires there were the result of complete fire suppression in the past.

We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving some of the natural areas of the Spokane area for people to enjoy and learn from.

President: Larry Thiemann Secretary: Helen Lininger
Vice-President: Tom Rogers Treasurer: David Lenten

Board members (in addition to officers): Doris Allgood,
Gary Brewster, Omar Carroll, Margaret Haggin, Francis
Potter, June Potter, and Ray Staley.

Our winter meetings will be held at Riverview Terrace Retirement Apartments, E. 1801 Upriver Drive, the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. You are cordially invited to attend.

BIRDS SCARCE IN WINTER HILLS

Winter censuses in the Dishman Hills Natural Area are finding very few birds. The only ones to be depended upon to be seen and heard are the little red-breasted nuthatches as they search the crannies in the bark of the ponderosa pines. Occasionally a raven croaks overhead as it looks for something to scavenge and a lone red crossbill searches unsuccessfully for pine seeds, very scarce this winter. Rather unexpected was a white-breasted nuthatch, accompanying the red-breasted. Apparently totally absent are chickadees, pygmy nuthatches and golden-crowned kinglets in the census plot. The west slope of the Natural Area came up with a big surprise on the Spokane's Christmas Bird Count, when Larry Thiemann found a flock of over 100 Cassin's finches. Usually the count has difficulty finding even one of these handsome birds, the males sporting a bright red cap and unstreaked breast but otherwise resembling the duller house finches that frequent our feeders.

Red squirrel tracks connect the pines in a few spots. The shortage of cones likely will make life difficult for them. Delicate lines of mouse tracks, presumably of white-footed mice, reveal the nightly wanderings of these tiny rodents. Neat, narrow footprints of an occasional coyote disturb the white. Much outnumbering them are the large coarse tracks of uncontrolled dogs. They may be one reason why deer are not using the area. The dog control ordinance, difficult to enforce, requires the cooperation of dog owners, who hopefully will become more responsible. Dogs just can't be tolerated in the Natural Area.

Snowfall in the Hills has been moderate so far but as it melts in the recent chinook weather it appears to be soaking into the ground and should help to alleviate the extreme dryness caused by last summer's drought. Lingering evidence of that drought exists in dry, brown leaves still clinging to the snowberry bushes. Likely no permanent harm will come to the plants in the Hills, which probably have experienced such conditions many times before and so are adapted to such trials. (continued in column 1)

Please use this form when sending contributions
(Contributions are income tax deductible)

Account No.

\$ _____ Land purchase fund

\$ _____ Memorial for _____

\$ _____ Annual Dues (\$10) New? ___ Renewal? ___

\$ _____ Student or Living Lightly (\$5)

\$ _____ To cover bulletin expense (\$2)

_____ Check here if you do NOT want your name listed as a donor.

Please make checks payable to Dishman Hills Natural Area Association and mail to the Treasurer, P.O. Box 14141, Spokane, WA 99214-0141. Many thanks!