

# LIGHTS and SHADOWS

from the  
Dishman Hills

June 2004

## WALKING CURES

As our country battles the issues of body weight gain and obesity for the citizens in our car-dependant society, the Dishman Hills steps forward with solutions and cures. While diet remains an important factor in the obesity epidemic, it's becoming increasingly clear that we are shaped partially by how our communities are shaped. There is currently a national conversation on how we can tackle these problems and the "walking cure" is being talked about. The simple activity of putting one foot in front of the other has surprising benefits for public health. Everyone is created to walk and just about everyone can participate in this healthy activity. Sprawling cities and dense developments are creating barriers for walkers. 44% of Americans say it's hard to walk anywhere from their homes. Studies show that for every kilometer, just over a half-mile, they walk in a day, they are 5% less likely to be obese. Other benefits include lower stress and blood pressure in communities where people have walking opportunities. Cities across the nation are spending millions to create walking space; here in Spokane we need mainly to save the spaces we already have.

The Dishman Hills Natural Area trail system offers about 12 miles of pathway including a number of trail loops and destination locations. Our trails offer a variety of fabulous safe and scenic routes that cover a topography that is both moderate and interesting. There is a trail for each and every one of you. There are two ways to navigate the paths in the Natural Area. You can obtain a map from Association headquarters, or from County Parks and Recreation, 404 N. Havana, or at trail head (when they are available). The map shows trails keyed to descriptions in the brochure. One can select from 10 trails choices: Goldback Springs, Lost Pond, Pond Loop, Edgecliff, Birch Hollow, Tower Mountain, Ridge Top, Pond Short, Eagle Peak Loop, and Pine Cliff nature trails. We will feature each one of these trails in Lights and Shadows in the following months to add details of interest for the hiker.

The other way to enjoy our trail system is to just "take off" and hike in any direction (on trails of course), filling in the time you have to spend in the Natural Area. Many enjoy cruising the network of trails without the worry of destination, distance, or time. Maybe getting a little lost (almost a Dishman Hills tradition) will add to the excitement of visiting our natural space. Test your skills of navigation and orientation by following your own mental map of the Natural Area.

The Pine Cliff nature trail is marked on the trail brochure and has a separate guide that is also available at County Parks or Association headquarters. The guide ties sites marked by numbered post with a dialog addressing the different aspects of the forest. Unfortunately, several of the numbered posts have been destroyed, leaving trail trekkers with the additional task of also finding some of the forest features discussed in the trail guide.

At about 100 calories burned per mile walked, you can choose your trail adventure to neutralize that donut, hamburger, or order of fries consumed earlier while spending some "quality" time surrounded by nature in its full glory. So hit the trail, it's good for you!

*The investigation of nature is an infinite pasture-ground where all may graze, and where the more bite, the longer the grass grows, the sweeter is the flavor, and the more it nourishes.*

Thomas Huxley, English biologist, 1825-1895

## NEW STUFF

Lately the Dishman Hills board of directors has been working to update, improve, and modernize the Association's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and procedures. Some of the changes that we already have made can be seen in this newsletter on the contributions/dues form. For starters, there is only a dues amount of \$10 listed, rather than the choices of "student, living lightly, to cover bulletin expenses" as in the older form. We wanted to make it easier and less confusing for all you supporters to cover annual dues, which as before are due at the first of the year, but will be accepted anytime. If you want to be a member of the Association please fill in the space in the form for dues. If you want to be a voting member in the year that you submit your dues, we will have to have them before June 30<sup>th</sup> of that year. With membership or donation we will put you on our mailing list and you will receive the Lights and Shadows bulletin. We also will send the bulletin to a number of important community educational and media contacts as a public service. If you think you are one of these and want to get the bulletin let us know. We, generally, do not put memorial donors on our mailing list unless they request it or are already on it. If you sent us a check, feel free to instruct us as to your intent. We will put donations in our general fund if not given instructions. It will be up to us to get better in telling you if you are current in membership or not. You, the supporters of the Association, are a vital component in all our efforts and we feel it's worth the effort to make your part as easy and efficient as possible.

## ORGANIZATION NEWS

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have any questions. We meet every other month at 7pm on the third Tuesday at Opportunity Elementary School, S. 1109 Wilbur, in the teacher's lounge. Our next meeting will be September 21, since we are on summer break.

The following are our May donors that have consented to be listed: Citizens for Responsible Development, Victoria Freeman, Cynthia Langlois, Kathryn Mann, Gwendolyn Rawlings, Kathi Schissler, Anne & Terry Smith, Rotary Club of Spokane Valley, and one anonymous donor. Thank you for your support.

Please use this form when sending **CONTRIBUTIONS or DUES**

All contributions are tax deductible

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Spokane, WA 99203

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