

**45 YEARS !**

The wind was blowing, the snow falling, and the grange was packed with over 100 people for this month's celebration of our 45 years of conservation work. It was a smashing success and a good time was had by all with plenty of fine food, drink, and great conversation.. Many thanks go to Mountain Gear and Golden Hills Brewery for drinks, and Wild Dowgs for food. Short presentations were made by County Commissioner Mark Richard on a Conservation Futures update, by Chris Kopczynski with a personal tale on the value of Big Rock, and by Jeff Lambert with a summation of current activities and an introduction to our new fund raising campaign to support our planned land purchase next spring that is part of our Dream Trail Project to connect the conservation lands in the Dishman Hills. In addition, Michael Hamilton spoke on the history of the Association, the text of which follows, trimmed a bit to fit the space available in the newsletter:

How did we get here today, a conservation organization that is the owner and steward of almost 800 acres of prime urban forest, and a successful partner in creating close to another 1,200 acres of public accessible conservation and recreation lands? It's a story that took 45 years, tens of thousands of volunteer hours, hundred of thousands of dollars in donations, and countless amounts of freely offered professional and government assistance.

But the story really isn't about numbers, it's about people. Many of you will remember the 1960's when the Association was started. It was a time when there was a call to action to all the citizens of our country and community to right social injustices, care for the environment, and reach for the moon. The story of how these forest-covered hills became so important to save goes back a bit farther. The name of the Hills was born of fire, the Great Spokane fire of 1889, when a new immigrant from Virginia, Addison Dishman, lost his downtown livery stable, and move out to the Spokane Valley to start a granite quarry and a small settlement. The name stuck and the quarry still resides on the east side of the natural area.

Over the years the dense forest that blankets the Dishman Ridge was used by generations of hikers, and outdoor enthusiast. The forest was a place of adventure, wonder, and a welcomed connection to the Wild West. It was also a place of refuge and during the Great Depression there was a small hobo village on the east side next to the railroad tracks. Many memories of the Hills are based in the adventure experienced when kids wondered into the mysterious depths of the forest that seemed to go on forever.

The Dishman Hills was a special place long before a band of citizens formed in the mid sixty's to start the process to save these natural spaces for the future. But then it was time to take action to secure what had been assumed as a community natural area for so long. The first task was a call for public involvement. It was in the early Spring of 1966, that a hike was planned for the public. The event was lead by a small but dedicated group that formed over the winter to start the ball rolling. Over 100 people showed up. A petition was started to submit to the County government asking them to take the necessary steps to form a natural area, and over 5,000 signatures were obtained. Public involvement was there, and now it was time to organize. Our founders wanted to structure the group for the long haul, and took the time to charter as a Federal non-profit organization, and as a State charitable corporation.

It was early on that the members of this new group realized that it was now time to go to work. The first purchase in 1970 was 80 acres bought with the financial help of the Nature Conservancy, but raising the funds to pay off this purchase was the real work to be done. The story goes on and on over the years with finding additional land purchases, paying off the debt, and seeking partners to share the task of saving the Hills. Patience, perseverance, and focusing on our mission have been the key to our success. But maybe the most important component of what drove and drives now our organization to see the job done and done right, is a firm faith that our community supports us, and that we are doing something really good to make Spokane a special place to live and grow.

**ASSOCIATION NEWS**

We are a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have questions. Our board meets every month on the third Tuesday. Our next meeting will skip the Holidays and be our annual membership meeting on January 17th, 7 pm. We meet at the Moran Prairie Spokane County Library, 6004 South Regal St. Visitors are always welcomed.

The following are our October donors that have consented to be listed: Nancy Cashon, Joseph Collins, The Stanley and Bernice Fahlgren Fund, Celestra Frost, Mary Gardner, Lois Hansen, Eris Heggem, Lois Hansen, The Hobnailers, Jean Koch, Cynthia Langlois, Pat Manners, Leo Middendorf, Barbara Morkill, Robert Pyle, Shirley Schneider, Rose Schultz, Harold Skinner, Nanette Smith, Marilyn Stedman, Richard Taylor, Landa Wambeke, Edith Wilson, Jeanne Wilson, Judy Wende, Hershel Zellman, and two anonymous donor. Sincere thanks to all that helped complete our land deal with the County this month.

***YES, I want to help protect our natural areas in the Spokane Region***

Enclosed is my tax-deductable donation of :

No. of Attendees

\$ 15\*    \$ 25    \$ 50    \$ 100    Other    Nov.12 Event

Gift is a Memorial for: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Acc. No. (see address) \_\_\_\_\_  Please don't list me as a donor

**Please return this form along with your check payable to DHNAA**

I would like to receive my Lights & Shadows online   My email address is: \_\_\_\_\_