

FLSRV Newsletter



November
2011

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In Memoriam

JOHN CHARLES ELLIS

He walks in beauty on paths unseen.

Keeping Pine River Park Open

Lance Pounder

The Friends of Little Spokane River Valley helped keep Pine River Park open yet another year. Our main duties were to maintain the lawns and pay the water bill. Spokane County Parks provided portable toilets, road oiling, garbage dumpster, and start up maintenance of the sprinkler system. Because of the late spring we were able to save some money, as mowing and watering were not needed as soon as expected.

I would like to thank all of the people that volunteered their time to help pick up trash. This year we did not put out garbage cans in hopes that park users would put their trash directly into the dumpster, which was a success. This saved us from having to empty trash cans into the dumpster, sometimes numerous times a day on hot weekends. During the summer I would go down to the park to check on things and would be very impressed at how clean it was. I don't know everybody that helped out, but to all that did I give a big Thank You. All in all I think this year went well. This summer I noticed on a lot of the hot days the parking lot would be full. Again I would like to thank all that made this a big success, and it was great to have our neighborhood park open another year.

2012 Annual Meeting and Dinner/Auction

Tina Wynecoop

- RESERVE THIS DATE -
Saturday, February 25, 2012
Wandermere Golf Club

Doors open
5:30pm
Meeting Times
6:30pm, dinner 7:00 pm

Enjoy the meal, catch up on the latest happenings, and experience a time of fellowship with others who live in our Valley. At the bottom of the enclosed membership form is a tear-off portion for ordering your tickets. The cost is \$19.00 per person. Fill it out and send it in today. Call Harla Jean 466-2823 if you have questions.

86,400 Seconds

Tina Wynecoop

Each day we are gifted 86,400 seconds. Have we used even one to say "Thank you!"? Well, yes! And it would take all of those seconds to acknowledge the wonderful donors, both individuals and businesses, who gave such interesting and valuable items for our annual meeting's silent auction held in early March 2011.

FLSRV 2011 Auction Item Donors:

Merle and Diana Moberly
Wandermere Golf Course
Peggy Ostness, Alan McCoy
Rosemary and Harold Balaz
Postnet @ Wandermere
Spokane Audubon Society
Roger and Corliss Slack

Starbucks @ the "Y"
Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture
Village Centre Cinemas
Auntie's Bookstore, Jack Nisbet
Petite Chat Village Bakery
Tecla's Hair and Skin Care
Pounder's Jewelry
Lance and Mena Pounder
Rocket Bakery
Roberta and Jim Ellis, Grease Monkey # 698
Jeanne Dammarell
Rick and Sue Kellogg
Fred Meyer - Wandermere
Oil Can Henry's # 078
Kirk and Lori Neuman, Subway
Wandermere Car Wash Plaza
Camino Real Mexican Grill
Petunia's Market Place
Starbucks Coffee @ Wandermere
UPS Store 0957, Wynecoop Hens
Lindell Haggin
Carol and Dale Walker
Susan and John Holen, It's a Wrap
Ice Age Floods Institute Cheney-Spokane Chapter

Special thanks, too, are extended to Bobby Ross and his staff for their generous support.

It is interesting to note that the \$1,500 raised at the auction almost covered FLSRV's donation towards keeping Pine River Park open to the community this summer. Supply and demand go hand in hand. The many volunteer hours that also went toward the park's maintenance are not factored into the dollar amount - but they attest to the deep care this non-profit organization has for the Little Spokane River Valley.



Birds Falling From The Sky

Tina and Judge Weyecoop

Last January Bald eagles were witnessed falling out of the sky in an area bounded by Little Deep, Deadman (Peone), and Spring Creeks and the Little Spokane River. The first disturbing report came New Year's Eve as the temperature was hovering at zero degrees. A sub-adult eagle was found face down in the snow at the river's edge by the Michaelis family. Rescue and capture was difficult because the bird managed to flounder into the river and dark was falling. Photos and video are available at:

www.spokesman.com/video/2011/apr/20/wildlife-rehabilitators/



Success was measured by the bird's rehabilitation at Ponti's Veterinary Clinic in Otis Orchards and its release three days later.

Still, this wasn't a single event: an



eagle was seen falling from the sky at the busy intersections by Wandermere

Golf Course. There were three other reports during the month and then near month's end a school bus driver saw a forlorn looking adult Bald eagle standing alongside Dartford Road. After an amazing rescue that could have only been accomplished with the help of a young man living nearby, the bird was rehabilitated and released.

Blood samples, x-rays, checks for e-coli and poisoning, as well the clinic staff's familiarity with injured birds in general, did not pinpoint the cause of this rash of unusual avian events.

Will the winter of 2011/2012 include more phenomena such as these? We hope not. But, we are prepared with phone numbers and advice to share if again Bald eagles are compromised.



Valley Cleanup

Michael Kennedy

Friends of the Little Spokane River Valley held their annual cleanup day for the Valley on Saturday, April 16, 2011. Approximately 20 volunteers and members met at the bottom of Shady Slope. The group cleaned up most of the major roads in the Valley from Wandermere to Perry; Shady Slope to the top of the hill; Dartford to Hazard Road; Hatch Road to the pool; and Golden Road, Midway, and Colbert Road.



They collected a lot of trash, miscellaneous wood, glass and a few tires. Estimated total trash was 700 to 800

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lbs. less than the previous year's total. Maybe we're slowly getting ahead of it and people are becoming self-conscious of throw stuff out the window!

After the cleanup, a chili feed was held on Bart and Lindell Hagen's front porch for those who helped out. Those who cooked: Tina Wynecoop and Lindell Haggins made chili, Martha Schaefer and Roberta Ellis made cornbread and Harla Jean Biever baked the cookies. Thanks to all who helped with both cleanup and the cooking!



- MARK YOUR CALENDARS -

Next year's cleanup is scheduled for April 14, 2012. We will send out a notice to remind you and set up the signs a week in advance. Thank you for your continued support to keep our Valley clean.



Better Dead Than Alive?

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Crossing Paths With Wildlife in Washington's Cities and Towns
Better dead than alive? As strange as it seems, some trees can actually provide more habitat for wildlife when they're dead than when they're alive. Standing dead and dying trees, called "snags" or "wildlife trees," are important for wildlife in both natural and landscaped settings. Birds, small mammals, and other wildlife use snags for nests, nurseries, storage areas, foraging, roosting, and perching. Live trees with snag-like features, such as hollow trunks, excavated cavities, and dead branches can provide similar wildlife value. Snags occurring along streams eventually fall into the water, adding important woody debris habitat for fish and other aquatic life. Snags can attract wildlife species to your property that you might not otherwise see.

More than 100 species of our birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians need snags for nesting, roosting, and denning. Hollow snags and large knot-holes are used by Douglas squirrels, northern flying squirrels, martens, porcupines, raccoons, and even black bears. Several species of owls and woodpeckers also use large cavities. Bluebirds, chickadees, swallows, wrens and other songbirds use smaller cavities. Brown creepers, nuthatches, bats, lizards, and mourning cloak butterflies will roost behind loose bark and bark slits for winter warmth and shelter. Some 45 of our wildlife species forage for food in snags, which are often

loaded with insects. Woodpeckers, sapsuckers, flickers, nuthatches, and a myriad of other insectivorous species regularly make snags their dining rooms. Mice, squirrels, jays, crows and other wildlife use snags more like kitchens, for food storage areas.

Some snags make ideal hunting perches for hawks, eagles, and owls. The more open resting perches that snags provide are preferred by swallows, band-tailed pigeons, mourning doves and other

colonial birds. And of course the resonating surfaces of some snags are perfect for woodpeckers to announce their presence with their hammering bills during courtship season. Snags of both deciduous and coniferous trees are used by wildlife.

The most favored snag species east of the Cascades are ponderosa pine, western larch, quaking aspen, and paper birch; west of the Cascades, Douglas fir, western red cedar, big-leaf maple and cottonwood snags are highly used.

Softwood trees such as fir tend to make better food foraging trees, while hardwood trees are sometimes better for nesting cavities.

Unfortunately, many of these dead or dying trees are cut down without much thought to their wildlife value and the management options that can safely prolong their existence. Of course if not managed properly, snags can

pose a risk to people and structures. If a dead or dying tree threatens something that can be moved, such as a swing set or patio furniture, consider moving those items before cutting the tree down. An alternative to eliminating the entire tree is to remove only the dangerous sections. Consulting with a certified arborist experienced in wildlife snags is recommended. These professionals can determine what part of a tree is a hazard and provide management options to reduce or eliminate any risk. Remaining parts can be removed over time. Often, once the unsafe limbs or portions of the trunk have been removed, the tree is safe.

Retain live trees and tall shrubs near a snag to protect it from wind and provide a more complete environment for wildlife. In urban areas, tall snags are best located away from high activity areas, where they won't pose a hazard if they fall. Trees that lean away or are downhill from structures and other areas of human activity present little or no risk. When a tree must be cut down, maximize its habitat value by placing as much of the debris as possible near the area where the tree was removed. In hot, dry areas, move the material into the shade of nearby trees or large shrubs. you can create a snag from trees that are hazardous or problematic, like ones with forked tops or disease or invasive roots threatening a drainage or septic system, or individual trees in a group that needs thinning. Like landscaping rocks and boulders, snags can add interesting, artistic angles to your property.

More information about snags, including details about how to safely create a snag, or enhance existing dead or dying trees, is available at wdfw.wa.gov/living/snags/



Little Spokane Bridge is Being Replaced

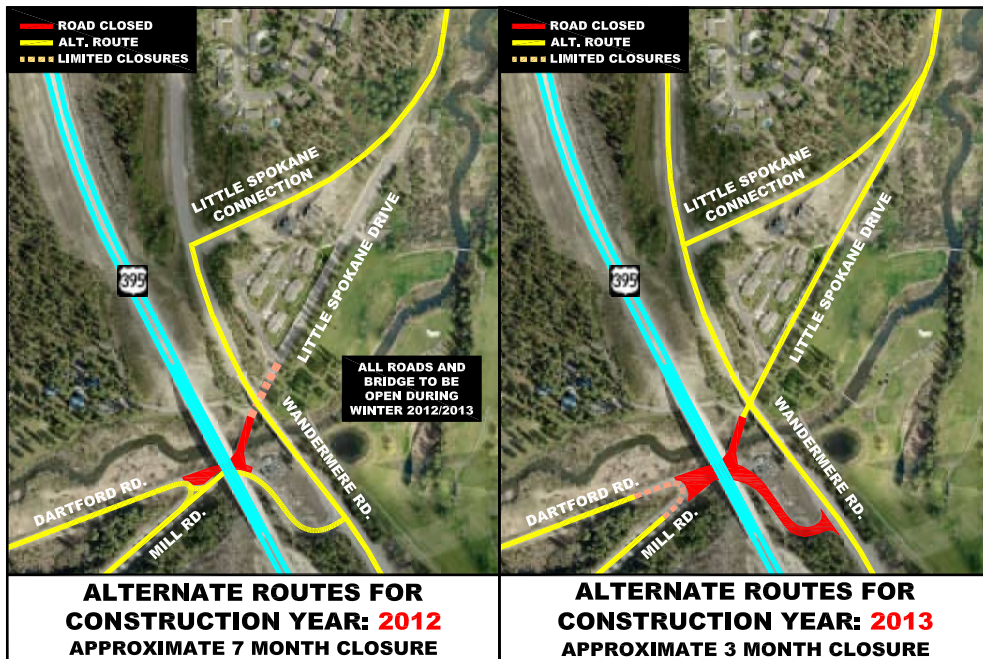
Martha Schaeffer

Bridge #3602 on Little Spokane Drive at the intersection of Dartford and Mill Roads is being replaced next year. An Open House public meeting was held on Tuesday, October 25, 2011 at the Christian Life Church located on Little Spokane Drive providing citizens an opportunity to ask questions about the project with County Engineering staff who designed the project. It was well attended. Displays gave details of the project which can be found at www.spokanecounty.org/engineer/content.aspx?c=1655

Between 1951 and 1959, fifteen bridges of this type were constructed in Spokane County. Of these, 4 have been reconstructed, 9 are posted with weight restrictions, and 3 are structurally deficient. The Little Spokane Drive Bridge is being replaced due to its deteriorated condition. There is concrete deterioration, concrete spalling (chips breaking off) with exposed reinforcing, settling, and girder shear and flexure cracks. Weight limits were placed on this bridge in 2006.

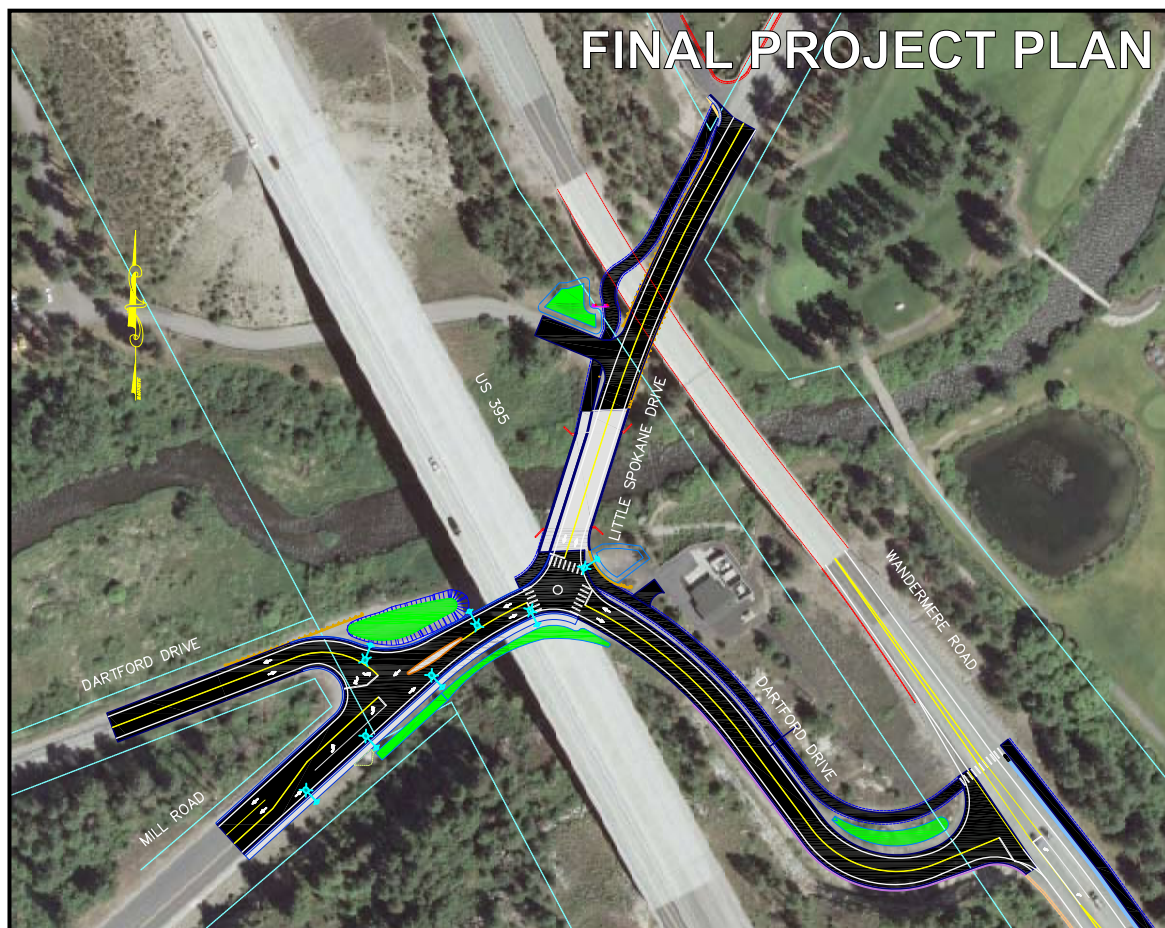
The project will be constructed in two phases in order to avoid having alternate routes in extreme winter weather conditions. The first phase will be the bridge replacement scheduled to begin in the Spring of 2012 and completed in the Fall of 2012 (about 7 months total). The second phase will be the reconstruction of the intersection and approach roadways and is scheduled for completion in the Summer of 2013. See the maps which show the final plan and the alternate routes.

The new bridge will



clear span the river and provide a roadway section that carries two 12' lanes with 4' shoulders and a barrier that protects a 10' wide "shared use path" that will connect to the Little Spokane River pathway system. It will be great to have the trail system continue across this new bridge and connect up to the new trail planned along

Wandermere Frontage Road to the Wandermere Mall area. (See accompanying article, County's Wandermere Road Pathway project). Pedestrian connectivity to shopping meets the top priority regarding trails in our valley area as identified by our community when surveyed over 10 years ago!



Walking Tour Review

Tina Wynecoop

In June award winning naturalist, historian, author and teacher Jack Nisbet led an all day walking tour of the Little Spokane area from the Painted Rocks to the Spokane House Interpretive Center at the confluence of the Little Spokane and Spokane Rivers. The history of explorer David Thompson's Spokane House (1810) in the newly updated interpretive center is first rate. Just off a ways from the site of the Spokane House Jack pointed out the fast flowing Spokane (Skeetshoo) River and said that it looked much like the way the explorer described it in his journals two hundred years ago.

A light rain did not deter the group from following the author into the nearby open pine woods where he stood next to a large thatched ant mound and explained its importance to local tribes for food storage [which he related in his January 2007 article titled *Pismires*, in North Columbia Monthly Magazine]:

"The mound-building Formica ants [pismires] are familiar to anyone who has spent time outside in our region, and anyone who has bent close to one knows that they can produce a pretty sharp sting. If you pick up one ant by the back and hold it to your face, it will also give you a faint spray of formic acid, citrus smelling and not at all unpleasant. For untold ages Columbia Basin tribes have used natural depressions in rockslides below basalt cliff faces to store food. These talus pits kept the goods cool and protected in hot summer weather, but could be prone to visits by mischievous pack rats and coyotes. Such raids were discouraged by taking handfuls of the thatch from an abandoned ant mound and spreading it around the pit. The thatch would be infused with formic acid, an odor that

announced its presence to everyone in the vicinity. And all the creatures of the forest, desert, and mountains, from the smallest mouse to the most insensitive human, know that the last creature you want to mess with is little Ant."



Illustration by Emily Nisbet

We learned to recognize geo-graphical features shaped by the Ice Age Flood in this landscape; native and non-native plants were described. Birds and insects were noted. He taught how to determine the general age of ponderosa pine trees and explained the importance of the yellow pine's sweet cambium layer as a food source for tribes. The shelf bracken (conk) he found on the ground became a lesson in how the Indians transported hot coals while journeying from one place to another thanks to the fungus' unique design. The Salish word for this bracken is "holds the fire."

I could go on and on, but you get the picture. It was a rich day of learning in a cultural, geographical, natural and historical setting. Special thanks to our FLSRV treasurer, Harla Jean Biever, for conceiving and planning this walking tour guided by a generous and knowledgeable teacher named Jack Nisbet.



County's Wandermere Road Project

Tina Wynecoop

The county's Wandermere Road Pathway project will connect with another new trail in the Little Spokane River Valley: The WSDOT Children of the Sun Pathway. This soon-to-be-open pedestrian trail masterfully increases the established

Friends of the Little Spokane River non-motorized trails and pathways system. Throughout all the planning done to enhance motor vehicle traffic north of I-90, engineers have not over-looked the growing need and desire for safer pedestrian routes connecting the community in ways that simple highway construction cannot do. Just imagine, in the near future someone could hike/bike all the way from the Northside Aquatic Center on Hatch Road to The Centennial Trail near I-90!

The new WSDOT pedestrian path can be accessed just north of Ace Hardware, on the east side of Wandermere Road. A short paved incline leads to the pedestrian trail which heads east all the way to U.S. 2 near Farwell and Shady Slope Roads. Travelers will get views of the artwork installed in the Perry Street bridge/overpass – the "Walking Heron" logo has been detailed into the concrete bridge abutments; while the flying Great blue heron design has been artfully incorporated into the bridge guardrails.

At a recent board meeting WSDOT engineers, Larry Larson and Bob Westby invited our FLSRV organization to adopt that portion of the trail between U.S. 395 and U.S. 2. The board accepted the offer and in turn it asks for our community's help with simple maintenance along the trail; WSDOT will install signage, kiosks (with FLSRV trail maps), and benches, and do other maintenance. Please contact Tina at WYNECOOP@hotmail.com to volunteer your help with this project.

It is amazing to think that a few community-minded visionaries started a trail movement in the 1990's in our valley that has resulted in such grand projects. "If you dream it, it will happen!" We might just refer to this huge trail network, woven around the Little Spokane River, as *The Dream Trail*.

You can access this web site for a map of the trail:

<http://spokane.golfnation.org/map179/wandermere-golf-course>





Friends of
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Membership

Included in this newsletter is a membership form for year 2012. Your board is hard at work. Many of the articles in this issue address projects and issues we are working on. We appreciate your support by renewed membership. We will keep you updated through our web site, newsletters, and reminder post cards..all a part of your privilege as members.

FLSRV Website

Have you visited our web site? We are continually updating information in which you might be interested. Take a look at flsrv.org.

