

FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE

Spring 1999 Newsletter

Citizens Lobby for Gorge Protection

On March 15, Friends volunteers and staff joined more than 275 other concerned citizens for Environmental Lobby Day in Salem, where citizen lobbyists spent the afternoon meeting with state representatives and senators. One of the seven bills highlighted during the day, and of chief concern to Friends of the Columbia Gorge, was Senate Bill 5505, which addresses restoring the Gorge Commission Budget.

A second Environmental Lobby Day is planned for May 17; contact Julie at Friends, or the Oregon Conservation Network (Lobby Day organizer), about how to get involved. ■

Washington Legislators Fund Gorge Protection, Oregon Still Considering Cuts

Contact Your Legislators Today!

by Michael Lang

■ The Columbia River Gorge Commission is a bi-state agency responsible for protecting the magnificent resources of the Columbia River Gorge, promoting recreational opportunities and sustainable economic development, and making sure that people who have a stake in the future of the Gorge have their voices heard. The Commission's budget is funded by appropriations from the Washington and Oregon Legislatures.

In April, the Washington Legislature approved funding for the Commission at the Governor's requested level of \$697,000. Now it is up to Oregon to do its part and match this level of funding. Matching funds from the Oregon Legislature will reverse the funding cuts imposed in 1997 and allow the commission to fulfill its statutory responsibilities.

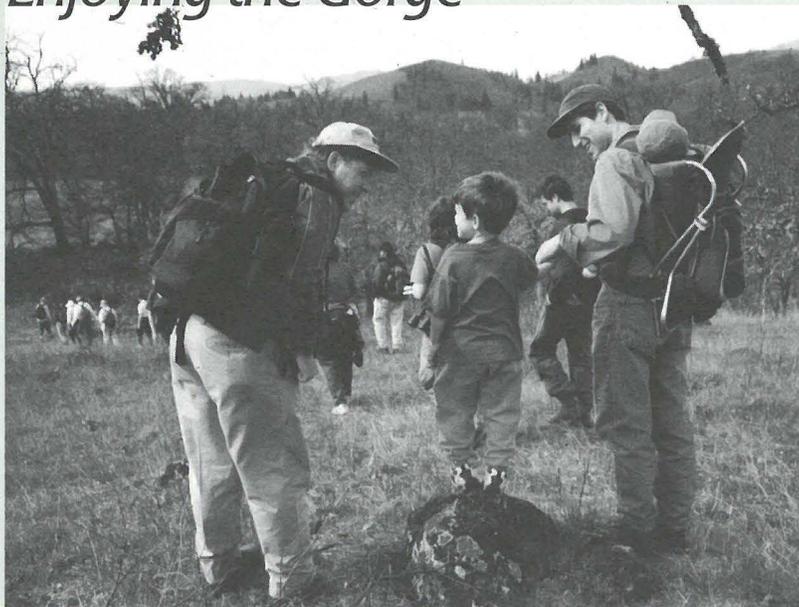
In Salem, anti-Gorge Legislators are continuing efforts to cut Commission funding and to reduce protection for this national treasure. Contact your legislators today and tell them to support the Governor's requested level of funding for the Gorge Commission's operating budget in Senate Bill 5055.

Why Commission funding is important

Preventing Urban Sprawl and Protecting Our Future: The Columbia River Gorge Commission is responsible for long-range planning and resource protection on non-federal lands within the National Scenic Area. In the next biennium, the Gorge Commission will assess the impacts of development on the scenic beauty and natural heritage of the Gorge and then review and

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Enjoying the Gorge



Hikers enjoy the Friends' Memaloose Hills Hike on March 20. Friends board member and State Representative Chris Beck (l) visits with a young hiker.

Photo: Ron Graham

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Spring Hiking Brochure insert

Executive Director's Letter

The following is excerpted from a speech given at the March 14 Annual Meeting

Ive been on the job full time since December and have found out quickly what a complicated task it is to protect the Columbia River Gorge. Though I guess it is simple enough to say that the majority of my time has been spent dealing with three Gorge-threatening houses: the one in Salem, the one in Olympia, and the one down the road (*from annual meeting site at Skamania Lodge*).

It is the best and worst of times in the Columbia River Gorge. The National Scenic Area Act has been in place for more than 12 years. Recent polls reveal that 80 - 90% of Portland metro, Vancouver metro and their suburban residents favor strong Gorge protection. Even more encouraging is evidence of increasing support of strong Gorge protection among Gorge residents, many of whom originally feared the Act would hurt their local economies. This fear has been dispelled as millions of federal dollars have been pumped into the Gorge.

Yet despite these positive trends, ominous signs remain. A small number of elected officials continue to work to gut or repeal the Scenic Area Act. Many in the Washington and Oregon legislatures are working to slash funding of the Gorge Commission's budget, as they did in 1997.

The Scenic Area Act is one of our nation's first efforts to preserve the environment and the economy of a region. If the lands of the Gorge are destroyed, the Act is destroyed. If the economies of the Gorge fail, the Act fails. Success of the Act is not a give and take: this land becomes a park, this land becomes a subdivision. It is a symbiotic relationship: fiercely protecting our farmlands and forests while fiercely protecting our communities that inhabit the Gorge.

We fight to protect this place because it is like no other place in the world. My wife Michelle and I moved to the Pacific Northwest five years ago because we fell in love with the people and the land. Many family

and friends couldn't understand our decision, in particular Michelle's cousin and his wife, our closest friends. Our move strained our relationship with them and it was several years before they came to visit.

When they finally arrived, we did everything to make them fall in love with the area. We visited the Rose Garden and the Oregon coast. And then we went to the Gorge. We drove up to Crown Point where we were the recipients of divine intervention: it was a sunny day, there was no wind and not a tour bus was in sight. They were captivated, as we were, even though we've been there a hundred times. And as we looked out over the Gorge, one of them quietly said, "Now I know why you moved here."

That's the power of this special place. The Native Americans have known it for thousands of years. Lewis and Clark wrote about it two centuries ago. Long-timers find comfort in it and newcomers embrace it. The Gorge is a national treasure and it deserves every ounce we can give it to protect it for ourselves, our children and our future generations.

Sincerely,



Kevin Gorman
Executive Director



Friends on the Move

A successful renewal of our volunteer program and the launch of the Vision 2000 campaign have caused some growth in the size of Friends' staff. This growth, combined with the expiration of our current lease, means Friends will be moving to a new office in early June.

Our new office address will be 522 SW Fifth, Ste. 820, Portland, OR 97204 (very close to our current location); our phone and fax number will remain the same. However, our e-mail addresses will change when we move, to [first name]@gorgefriends.org.

We hope you'll come visit once we're settled in! ■

Citizen Involvement Update

Volunteering for the Gorge

by Julee Wasserman

Friends of the Columbia Gorge enjoys a very active volunteer program thanks to Volunteer Coordinator Julee Wasserman. For more information about any of the following activities, or to volunteer for the Gorge, contact Julee (503-241-3762; julee@focg.org).

Speaking for the Gorge

Since November 1998, the 28 members of Friends' Speakers Bureau have made more than 40 presentations, including presentations to Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimist, Lions and Garden Clubs, and to schools, businesses, and churches. Presentations include a beautiful 20-minute slide show about the Columbia River Gorge and focuses on topics including: the mission and work of Friends; the challenges facing the Gorge today; and, opportunities for citizen involvement in protecting the Gorge.

Toiling for the Gorge

While much of Friends' work to protect the Gorge is carried out in offices, we recognize the importance of "hands on" activities to help enhance this natural wonder. During the past six months Friends staff, volunteers and partners took on some exciting and rewarding stewardship projects, including:

- Lewis and Clark State Park clean-up (a partnership with Oregon State Parks).
- Sandy River Delta Reforestation: Friends partnered with Friends

of Trees and the U.S. Forest Service for a native tree-planting. More than 900 trees were planted, including Oregon Ash, Black Cottonwood, Red Alder and a mix of native willows.

- Lewis and Clark State Park trail-building: Volunteers, with partner Chinook Trail Association, returned to the park to repair and rebuild the nature trail.

- Earth Day Cleanup along the Historic Columbia River Highway Trail.

- Benson State Park cleanup: Friends partnered with Hands on Portland and Oregon State Parks for this project near Multnomah Falls.



photo: Julee Wasserman

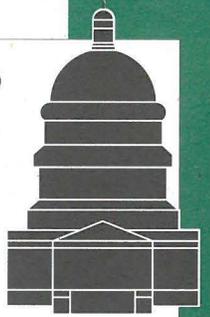
Recognizing Gorge Volunteers

In appreciation for all volunteers do on behalf of Gorge protection, Friends hosted a Volunteer Appreciation Party at the Bridgeport Brew Pub in March. In addition to pizza, door prizes, and dancing, awards were presented to volunteers who made significant contributions during the past six months. Alder Creek Kayak and Canoe deserves extra recognition for providing some great door prizes: two free sea kayak lessons!

Special thanks goes out to the volunteers who came to the Friends office for phone banking during the past few months. ■

(continued from front page)

Legislative Session



revise the Scenic Area Management Plan as necessary.

Recreation and Economic Development: The National Scenic Area Act calls for enhancement of recreational opportunities and for sustainable economic development in Gorge communities. The Commission plays a key role in planning for appropriate recreational development and assisting in administering the Scenic Area economic development grant and loan program.

Outreach and Education: As a bi-state agency, the Commission provides a public service by facilitating better communication between the six Gorge counties, state and federal agencies, the Tribes, landowners, interest groups and the general public.

Contact your Oregon Legislators

(Representative / Senator's name)
(Room Number) State Capitol
Salem, OR 97310

Send a copy of your letter to:
Ways & Means Natural Resources
Subcommittee
c/o Ken Rocco, Legislative Analyst
H-178, State Capitol
Salem, OR 97310

To leave a message for a legislator:
Oregon State Legislature Hotline:
1-800-332-2313

To find out who your legislator is:
www.vote-smart.org

For more information contact Michael Lang at Friends of the Columbia Gorge, (503)241-3762; michael@focg.org. ■

Above: Volunteers, including staff from Boora Architects, take a break from trail-building in Lewis & Clark State Park.

Conservation and Legal Program Highlights

Conflict Over Illegal House in Columbia River Gorge Moves to the Courts

Friends seeks to intervene in homeowners' lawsuit

The owners of an illegal house in the Columbia River Gorge filed suit in Washington State Superior Court in April, seeking to overturn the Columbia River Gorge Commission's ruling that the house in question violates the National Scenic Area Act and must be moved.

Brian and Jody Bea, owners of the illegal structure in Prindle, WA, filed a lawsuit against Skamania County and the Gorge Commission, claiming that their constitutional rights were violated when the Gorge Commission ordered that the house be brought into compliance with the Scenic Area Act.

Findings from the Gorge Commission hearings on the matter revealed that the only way the house can be brought into compliance is through relocation to another site on the 20-acre lot.

Friends' intervention in the case is necessary toward ensuring the Gorge Commission's ruling, that the house be moved, prevails. This

is the only decision that would maintain the integrity of the Scenic Area Act.

"The Columbia River Gorge is a national treasure that must be protected for our children and future generations," said Michael Lang, Friends' conservation director. "The Scenic Area Act

The only way the house can be brought into compliance is through relocation to a less visible site on the 20-acre lot.

protects the Gorge while allowing for new development. Unfortunately, in this case, the landowners' and Skamania County's actions repeatedly defied the law that requires new development to blend in with, and not intrude on, the scenic beauty of the area. We believe that the Gorge Commission had no legal choice other than requiring the house be relocated, and we seek to intervene to uphold that decision." ■

Site of proposed quarry operation near Table Mountain.



Gorge Quarries Under Scrutiny

As a result of Friends' January 1999 appeal of a Skamania County decision approving a rock quarry and processing operation near Table Mountain (in a known slide area and amidst the habitat of two threatened species), a series of meetings is underway to discuss the issues of quarries in the National Scenic Area. Participants including landowners, quarry owners, the WA Department of Fish & Wildlife, the U.S. Forest Service, Friends of the Columbia Gorge and other stakeholders are exploring forming a working group that would address quarries and resource protection in connection with such operations. ■

Gorge protection is rewarding in more ways than one

Gifts to Friends can result in tax breaks

by Jane Haley

Gifts to Friends of appreciated assets, such as stocks and artwork, benefit the Friends of the Columbia Gorge as well as its donors. Many of our donors may not realize that federal tax laws encourage and reward this type of charitable giving.

For instance, donors may have stock that has appreciated over the years; if they were to sell the stock at today's value, they would pay a hefty tax on the gain. However, by donating the stock to a charitable, nonprofit organization, they can deduct the full value of those gifts from their taxes. The gifts then circulate back to the community in a positive way and the donors realize a substantial tax savings.

Friends' donors are also being introduced to the new Endowment Program, which has been established to give the organization a solid financial foundation. A gift to Friends' Endowment is an attractive feature for many donors who make an annual membership gift toward general operating support, but who wish to also make a larger, lasting gift, one that will be set aside in investments that will grow each year. Earnings on the principal then provide a reliable source of funding for Friends' Gorge protection work.

Please contact Jane Haley at (503)241-3762 for more information about these options. ■

Public Purchase of Sensitive Areas Can Ensure Protection

Urge your senators in Congress to support land acquisition funding

by Kevin Gorman

One of the most effective tools for protecting the Columbia River Gorge is the public acquisition of critical lands. Since passage of the Scenic Act in 1986, the U.S. Forest Service has purchased more than 30,000 acres of critical and sensitive lands.

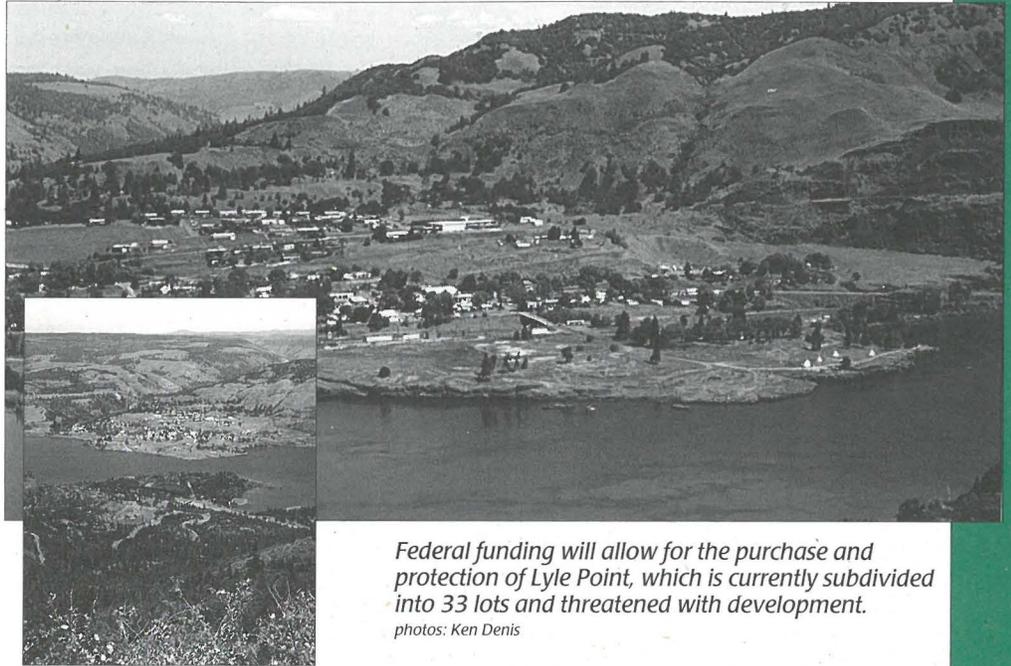
In the past two years alone, Congress approved \$10 million for purchasing lands from willing sellers. Over the years, land acquisition funding has secured some of the Gorge's most special resources, from the rare plant and hiking trails of Burdoin mountain and Rowena Dell to the pastoral Mt. Pleasant highlands and the undisturbed Archer Mountain. These federal efforts, combined with private conservation work and state acquisitions in crucial areas such as Beacon Rock State Park and the beautiful 6,000 acre Dalles Mountain Ranch (WA), help provide comprehensive protection for the crown jewels of the Gorge.

This year, Friends of the Columbia Gorge is working with a diverse coalition including Trust for Public Land, Columbia Land Trust, and local landowners and real estate agents. Our request to Congress for funding for this fiscal year totals more than \$9 million; Friends' staff will be traveling to Washington DC in June to lobby for this funding.

What You Can Do

- **Write your senators TODAY and ask them to support funding for land acquisition in the Columbia River Gorge.** With the increasing pressures of development in the Gorge, land acquisition can stop logging and quarries and promote the creation of more trails and wildlife habitat. But your senators need to hear from you.

- **Ask your senators to support**



Federal funding will allow for the purchase and protection of Lyle Point, which is currently subdivided into 33 lots and threatened with development.

photos: Ken Denis

the purchase of Lyle Point. Lyle Point is a flat peninsula that juts out into the middle of the Columbia River at its confluence with the Klickitat River in Klickitat County, Washington, and is within view of the Tom McCall Preserve in Oregon. Lyle Point is currently subdivided into 33 lots and is threatened with home-site construction.

- **Demand that the Forest Service purchase Chenowith Table.** In 1998 Friends worked with several others to ensure that the Forest Service received enough federal funding to purchase Chenowith Table and convert it into a park; we even convinced Congress to specify Chenowith Table by name for purchase. Despite our efforts, the Forest Service is still reluctant to purchase the land. Located just southwest of The Dalles, Chenowith Table is a 370-acre rimrock plateau with wildflowers, indigenous bunch grasses and sweeping views of the Columbia River Gorge. ■

Contact Information

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Columbia River Gorge National Scenic
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Art Carroll
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Hood River, OR 97031
(541) 386-2333
fax (541) 386-1916

A Full House and Good Vibes

Friends staff, board and members enjoy a successful 1999 Annual Meeting

by Jane Haley



On March 14, more than 130 Friends members and their guests enjoyed a pleasant Sunday afternoon at Skamania Lodge for our Annual Meeting. This year's meeting was so well attended that we had to bring in extra seating to accommodate the capacity crowd.

Meeting highlights include folk singers and a guest appearance by Washington Congressman Brian Baird (D-Vancouver), who delighted the audience with his boyhood memories of the Gorge.

The annual meeting's featured speaker, Jeanette Kloos from the Oregon Department of Transportation, presented an engaging slideshow detailing the restoration of the Historic Columbia River Highway. Ms. Kloos described how the landmark roadway has been lovingly restored using the lost art of stone masonry combined with state-of-the-art construc-

Top: This year's annual meeting was our best-attended yet!

Middle: Attendees to the March annual Meeting enjoyed a visit from Congressman Brian Baird (D, Vancouver).

Bottom: Folk musicians provided musical entertainment.

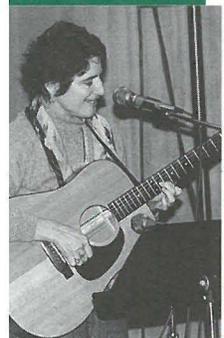


Photo: Ken Denis

tion techniques. Featured throughout the presentation were some of the beautiful views along the highway and from within the tunnels. We learned that the tunnels along the Historic Highway have viewing stations much like their Swiss counterparts, after which the tunnels were modeled.

Perhaps the most rewarding part of the meeting was just getting a chance to talk with members, many of whom have long personal histories with the



Above: Staff members (l to r) Beth Englander, Kym Snow and Michele Fuchs.

Gorge. We look forward to meeting more of our members at future events. ■

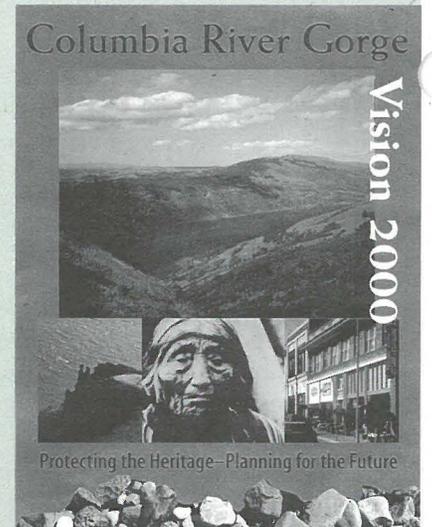
Columbia River Gorge Vision 2000

Steering committee forms, takes on its first project

The partners of the Columbia River Gorge Vision 2000 Campaign have been working diligently over the past several months to create a steering committee and begin targeting projects to promote and protect scenic views, natural areas, recreational opportunities and livable communities. The group is now composed primarily of Gorge organizations, businesses and individuals. Expect to see a list of projects in the coming months.

Coalition endorses recreation project

The Vision 2000 partners agreed to endorse and work to support the Columbia Gorge Recreation Coalition's proposal for federal funding. The coalition, spearheaded by the Columbia Gorge Windsurfing Association, is sponsoring four river access recreation projects and the The Dalles Riverfront Trail project; each project is important to continuing the livability and



recreation opportunities in the Columbia River Gorge. Visit CGWA's web site for more information: (<http://205.195.3/windsurf/cgwa/default.htm>) or call (541) 386-9225. ■

Columbia River Gorge Vision 2000 is a coalition of concerned individuals, organizations and businesses, from both within and outside of the Gorge, who came together to take action on behalf of one of our greatest natural treasures – the Columbia River Gorge.

Friends News...

Friends' Board of Directors Grows by One

Continuing our efforts to increase board membership in the Gorge, we are pleased to welcome Guy Moser to the board of directors of Friends of the Columbia Gorge.

Guy is a retired computer software executive with an active after-retirement life. He chairs the board of a new software start-up company, is board chair-elect for the statewide Oregon Advanced Technology Consortium, treasurer for the Board of Wasco County Nursing Care Inc., and teaches and counsels businesses in the Gorge through the Columbia Gorge Community College's Small Business Development Center.

Guy's favorite place in the Gorge is a silent, windswept oak grove, located on a hilltop on family property west of The Dalles. ■

20th Annual Summer Picnic

Mark your calendar! Friends of the Columbia Gorge's 20th annual Summer Picnic will take place Sunday, July 25. We're fortunate for the opportunity to be picnicking within the National Scenic Area this year, at North Cheatham's organic farming operation, Apeasay Orchards. For more information, or to volunteer, contact the Friends office. Expect a mailed invitation with further details in early July. ■

Goodbye and Hello to Friends Staff

Once again, the season is full of change. Two of Friends' outreach staff, Kathy Armstrong and Kate Roosevelt, moved on earlier this year to new and exciting challenges. We all enjoyed working with Kathy and Kate and appreciate all they accomplished during their time with Friends; we wish them all the best.

While we search for just the right addition to our outreach staff, we've added staff to another program; Michele Fuchs joined Friends in February as the part-time Member-

ship/Development Assistant. Michele comes from a recent position as staff assistant to a Multnomah County commissioner. A Gorge resident for six years, Michele explains how she came here:

"I discovered the Gorge one summer six years ago on a windsurfing trip to Hood River. It was July 4 and had been an incredible day of wind, water and blue sky.

After dinner a friend and I walked through town down to the waterfront to watch fireworks. That night I fell in love with the beauty of the Gorge; I moved to Hood River six weeks later and haven't left since.

"I am very proud to be part of the effort to protect someplace as spectacular as the Gorge," concludes Michele. ■

Friends Hops on the Information Superhighway

Friends will soon be woven into the World Wide Web! With the commencement of a Friends of the Columbia Gorge web site planned for early June, there will soon be a place for our members and other interested entities to electronically access information on organizational activities (such as the Spring Wildflower Hikes), current events, actions to take regarding threats to Gorge protection...the potential is endless.

We're planning a web site that will be dynamic and interactive, with opportunities for online discussions about decisions and issues effecting the Gorge. Start looking in early June for Friends on the web at <http://www.gorgefriends.com>. ■



Grass widows.
photo: Ron Graham

Friends of the Columbia Gorge

319 SW Washington St., #301
Portland, Oregon 97204
(503) 241-3762
info@focg.org

Mission Statement

Friends of the Columbia Gorge shall vigorously protect the scenic, natural, and cultural and recreational resources within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

We fulfill this mission by ensuring strict implementation of the National Scenic Area Act; promoting responsible stewardship of Gorge lands and waters; encouraging public ownership of sensitive areas; educating the public about the unique natural values of the Columbia River Gorge and the importance of preserving those values; and working with groups and individuals to accomplish mutual preservation goals. —Adopted November 20, 1997

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Michele Fuchs*

* Gorge residents

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WISH LIST

As mentioned, Friends' office is moving, and we hope to replace our old, decrepit office furniture with some new(er) items. Our wish list includes:

- reception-area furniture (chairs, tables, lamps, etc.)
- map drawers or racks
- wooden bookshelves (small and large)
- office desk chairs
- filing cabinets
- plants
- artwork (ideally, framed pictures of the Gorge)
- small printer tables
- 486 or better processor computers
- flatbed color scanner

Donations are tax deductible. Please contact Kym at the Friends office about donating toward our wish list.

Above: Walking the trails and looking for wildflowers in the Gorge is a delightful way to usher in spring time.

Photo: Ken Graham

Gorge Lore

Springtime in the Gorge

Wildflowers make any walk an exciting adventure

by Jerry Igo

Spring in the Columbia River Gorge means wildflowers! Of course there are many other reasons for visiting the Gorge...boardsailing, fishing, boating, hiking, sightseeing...but once you are captivated by the desire to walk the trails looking for wildflowers, you have found a lifelong way to usher in springtime.

You can go on the first sunny day in early March to see the Grass-Widows, Yellow-Bells and Prairie-Stars at Catherine Creek near Lyle, Washington. You might wait until May to climb to McCall Point on the Oregon side, finding Indian-Paintbrush, Lupine, Desert-Parsley, and Shooting-Stars. Either way, you will have a rewarding time.

Many of the earliest wildflower areas in the Gorge are not, as you might expect, near the milder Willamette Valley, but instead are east, where the oak woodlands and grassy slopes catch the early spring sunshine. The back roads near Mosier, the Tom McCall Preserve, the scablands east of The Dalles, are great places on a sunny April day. Balsamroot, Buttercups, Popcorn-Flowers and Glacier-Lilies make any walk an exciting adventure.

As the days get longer in May and June, the middle and west Gorge burst into flower. Lupines, Tiger-Lilies, Solomon's Plume, Bleeding-Heart and many more provide color around Crown Point, Multnomah Falls and Ainsworth. On the Washington side, Cape Horn, Stevenson and Dog Mountain show off their blossoms.

Learn their names, study their habitats, or just breathe in their fragrance. Life is richer and better because of wildflowers. ■

Jerry Igo lives in Mosier and is the new president of the Oregon Native Plant Society's Mid-Columbia Chapter. He's currently involved in a project tracking down all of the plants and animals Lewis & Clark collected during their journey; he's even using their diaries to locate the plant specimens on the same day the Lewis & Clark expedition located them! Comments or questions for Jerry may be sent via the Friends office.