

# FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA GORGE

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1994 NEWSLETTER

319 S.W. Washington Street, Suite 301, Portland, Oregon, 97204

Telephone: (503) 241-3762

## FOCG Works to Restore Mosier Twin Tunnels

*The tunnels would be the focal point for a linear park on the Historic Columbia River Highway*

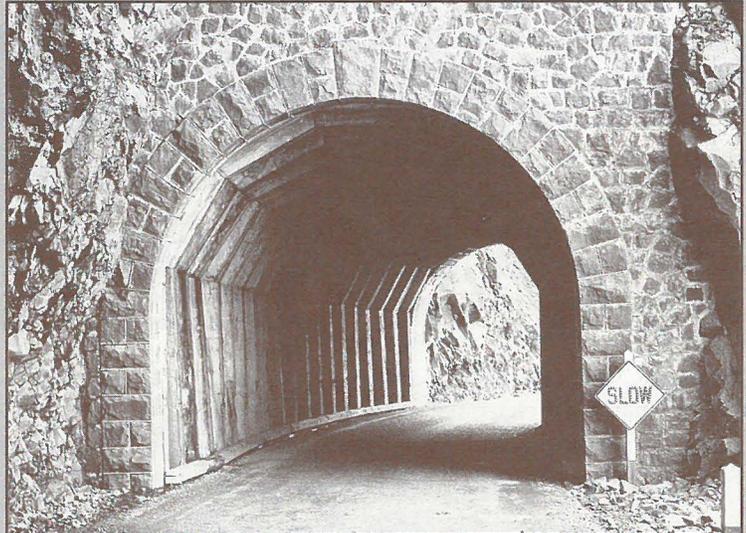
Since 1982, Friends of the Columbia Gorge has worked with a number of groups, including the Historic Preservation League of Oregon, to restore the Hood River to Mosier section of the Historic Columbia River Highway. This abandoned stretch of the Historic Highway is currently closed to automobile traffic, and would be restored to create a "linear park" for hikers, bicyclists and people in wheelchairs. The focal point of the park would be the reopened Mosier Twin Tunnels.

The Historic Highway was the brainchild of two visionary road builders: railroad tycoon Samuel C. Hill, and Samuel C. Lancaster, a gifted highway engineer with a great appreciation for natural beauty. In 1913, Lancaster stood at Chanticleer Point in the Gorge to begin his surveying work for the Highway. He later said:

"Standing here I realized the magnitude of my task and the splendid opportunity it presented. Instinctively there came a prayer for strong men, that we might have sense enough to do the thing in the right way . . . so as not to mar what God had put there. . . ."

Some think Lancaster's crowning achievement in designing the Historic Highway was the tunnels built into the rock cliffs at Mitchell Point and Mosier. These tunnels included arched openings framing magnificent views overlooking the Gorge. The Mitchell Point tunnel, patterned after the famous Axenstrasse Tunnel in Switzerland, was destroyed when the modern interstate highway was built through the Gorge.

*(Continued on Page 3)*



*Looking west showing the east portal of Tunnel No. 2, Mosier Twin Tunnels, circa 1930. Photo courtesy of the Oregon Department of Transportation*



*The west entrance of the Mosier Twin Tunnels as it exists today.*

## Executive Director's Letter

It's fall in the Columbia River Gorge, and the Gorge is entering another cycle of beauty. On fall and winter mornings, fog often lays like a blanket over the river, just below the cliffs of the Gorge. On such quiet mornings, it is difficult to think that what we treasure about the Gorge might not last forever.

I have lived in the Gorge since 1990, in a house in Corbett built in the 1950s. The former owner had lived there most of her life. She told me, "This is the best, most beautiful place in the whole world." Despite the east wind in the winter, I agree!

When I first saw the Gorge, I was stunned by its beauty and amazed that it has not yet been completely overtaken by the destructive urban sprawl that we seem unable to avoid as population grows. I have seen urban sprawl at its worst, and have seen how difficult it is to control.

I spent six years as an attorney in Orange County, California. There, the last fragments of wild canyon lands were under attack by three new freeways and massive residential and commercial development. This unchecked development destroys native plants, wildlife and natural areas; paves over orchards and farms; and brings traffic gridlock, air pollution and out-of-control costs for new roads, sewers, schools, and fire and police protection.

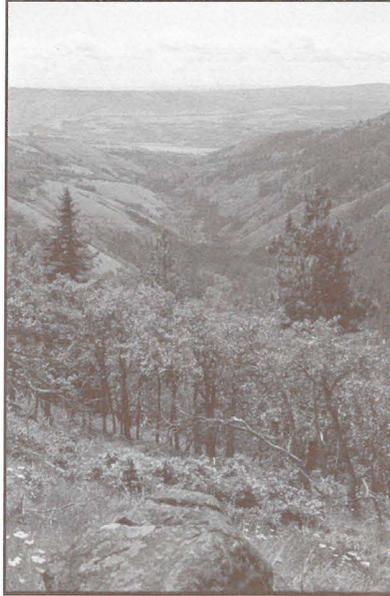
Urban residential and commercial development is already creeping close to the National Scenic Area, from Troutdale and Vancouver in the west to Hood River and The Dalles in the east. Population growth will only increase the pressure to develop the Gorge.

Nature sculpted the Gorge and placed in it wild and wonderful things. Development has already changed the Gorge forever. Our challenge now is to protect the Gorge from further degradation and urban sprawl. Our challenge is to fight to keep the Gorge full of wild places, native plants and wildlife, forests, farms, and untouched scenic vistas.

I want to thank all of our members and supporters for joining us to meet the challenge. The Gorge needs all of you.

*Lauri Aunan*

Lauri Aunan  
Executive Director



*Major Creek, Washington, as seen from its Northeastern boundary, looking south to the Columbia River. The Friends is working to protect the Major Creek and Catherine Creek area.*

## Mission Statement

*Friends of the Columbia Gorge shall vigorously protect the scenic, natural and cultural 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 February 3, 1994

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<i>Forest Project Coordinator:</i>	Michael Lang
<i>Receptionist/Clerk:</i>	Marna Moore
<i>Land Use Counsel:</i>	Kristen Pecknold
<i>Conservation Director:</i>	Joe Walicki
* Gorge resident	

## Newsletter Contributors

*Managing Editor:* Joe Walicki  
*Editor:* Kathleen Krushas  
*Contributors:* Lauri Aunan, Margaret Donsbach, Gary Kahn, Michael Lang  
*Photography:* Joe Walicki (except where noted)

*Deadline for the January newsletter is January 6.*

# The Friends Works to Restore Mosier Twin Tunnels

—Continued from front page—

The Mosier Twin Tunnels still exist, although they were closed and filled with rubble in the 1950s. Built in 1924, they include four portals and an observation gallery between the tunnels. The Mosier Twin Tunnels and the Hood River to Mosier stretch of the Historic Highway were among the features that led to the Highway's designation in the National Register of Historic Places.

Friends of the Columbia Gorge has led many walking tours and lectures for seniors' groups, wildflower groups, bicycling groups and people in wheelchairs on this route. Its spectacular views, gentle grade and wide roadway make it ideally suited for recreational use by people who cannot easily access other recreational areas in the Gorge.

In 1987, the Friends developed a plan for reuse of the Hood River to Mosier section as a "linear park". This plan was used in the 1987 state study, *A Study of the Historic Columbia River*

*Highway*, which recommends that the section be open to "hiker, biker/handicapped traffic" and "occasionally allow one-way vintage car travel." The 1992 Gorge Management Plan also recommends use of this area as a walking and bicycling path.

Thanks to Senator Mark Hatfield, in the fall of 1993, Congress appropriated \$2.5 million for restoration of the Mosier Twin Tunnels area as a hiking and bicycling path. During 1994, work began to plan the reopening of the tunnels.

In July, the Friends learned that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) plans to

allow motor vehicle traffic on this stretch of the Historic Highway, in conflict with every plan for the area over the past 10 years. ODOT has said it must allow cars in the park to justify its use of Oregon gas taxes to match the \$2.5 million in federal funds. Under the Oregon Constitution, Oregon gas taxes can only be used for highways. While

ODOT has said it will restrict car access to the park to two days a month, the Friends is concerned that if the park is opened to regular car use, it will be very difficult for state agencies to resist the pressure to allow increased access to cars.

Since July, the Friends has worked to achieve the original vision for the Mosier Twin Tunnels: a park for hikers, bicyclists and people in wheelchairs, without the noise, pollution and danger from car traffic. To date, 22 environmental and community groups have joined us in support of a motor vehicle-free park. The Columbia River Gorge Commission and Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee have reaffirmed their support for a linear park closed to regular motor vehicle traffic.

The Friends is working with state and local agencies to identify and obtain non-gas tax funding for the park. If private or public funds can be found to replace gas taxes, the park can remain closed to cars. The Friends is also working with the Gorge Commission and other agencies to ensure that the park will never be opened to unlimited motor vehicle access. ▲

*If you would like to help the Friends work for the linear park, contact Joe Walicki, Conservation Director, 241-3762.*



*The Friends' staff tour the closed section of the Historic Columbia River Highway between Hood River and Mosier. The Friends is working to create a unique hiking and bicycling trail for this area.*

## Mosier Twin Tunnels 1920

*Jeffrey C. Plummer*  
DESIGN

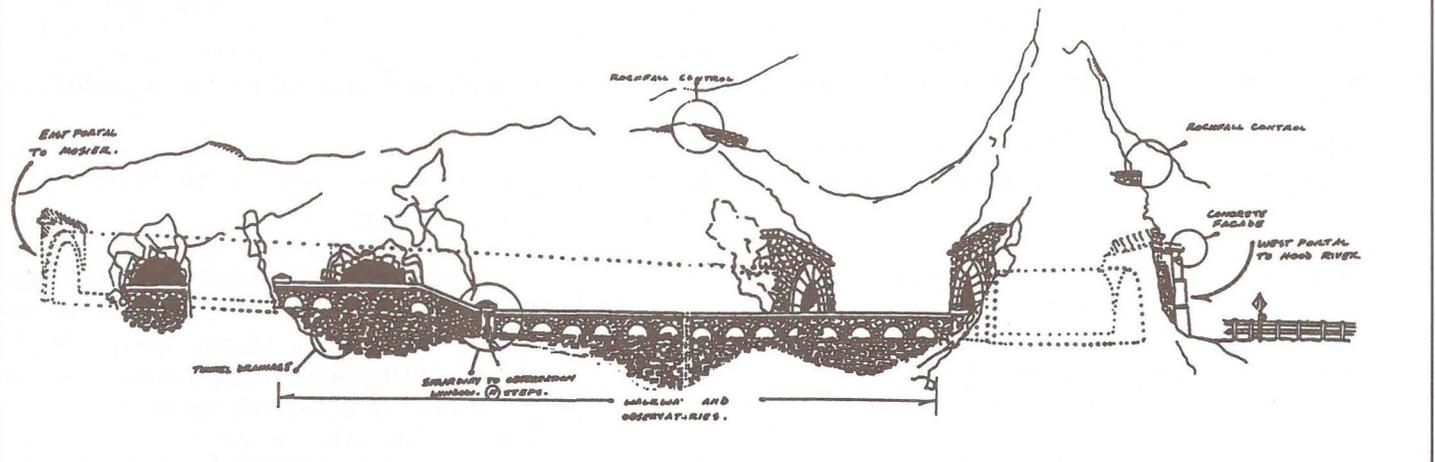
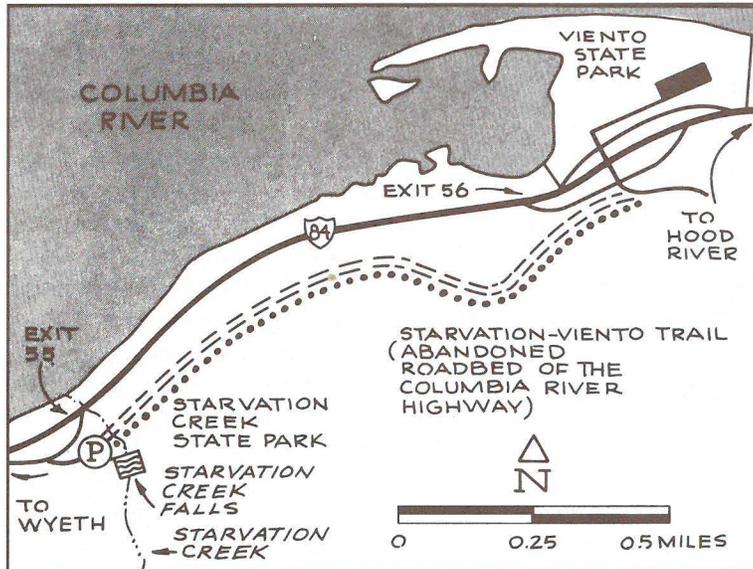


Diagram courtesy of the Oregon Department of Transportation

# Take a Hike

## Starvation-Viento Trail



### Vital Statistics

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Child safety:** Good

**Time:** Less than 1 hour

**Distance:** 2.2 miles, round trip

**Elevation gain:** Negligible

**USGS map:** Mount Defiance

**Viewpoints/attractions:** Historic Columbia River Highway

### Summary

This short trail follows an abandoned section of the roadbed of the Historic Columbia River Highway from Starvation Creek State Park to Viento State Park. Along the way, watch for an original cement milepost, one of only three still standing, not to be confused with a wooden post nearby. This milepost marker was installed in 1915; the cement mileposts now lining the Historic Columbia River Highway are replicas, installed in 1991.

For the west trailhead, from I-84 take Starvation Creek State park exit 55, and walk east through the park. For the east trailhead, from I-84 take Viento State Park exit 56, and find the trailhead immediately south of the exit. Regardless of which trailhead you start from, simply follow the old roadbed.

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# Forest Protection Update

## *The Friends Files Lawsuit to Enforce Gorge Forest Protection Laws*

by Michael Lang

**O**n October 11, Friends of the Columbia Gorge filed a lawsuit in federal district court seeking enforcement of forest protection laws for forests in the Special Management Areas of the National Scenic Area.

The public assumes that forests in the Gorge are protected. Unfortunately, Gorge forests intended to be protected under the National Scenic Area Act continue to be cut in violation of the law.

The Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area Management Plan sets forth strict resource protection guidelines for Gorge forests where timber harvest is allowed. The Management Plan also designated small portions of certain forest ownerships in the Gorge as "Open Space," and prohibits timber harvest in those areas.

"The Management Plan provides increased protection to SMA forests, but the states and the Columbia River Gorge Commission are not enforcing these existing regulations," said Gary Kahn, legal counsel for Friends of the Columbia Gorge. "We are simply asking the court to direct the agencies to implement and enforce existing laws to protect Gorge forests."

In the last two years, Oregon and Washington forest practice agencies have continued to allow timber harvest without compliance with the forest protection guidelines required under the Management Plan. In Oregon, there is not even an application process before Gorge forests can be cut.

"The Management Plan's guidelines recognize that forests are valuable far beyond the number of board feet that can be produced," said Lauri Aunan, executive director of Friends of the Columbia Gorge. "We need diverse, healthy forests to protect our native fish, plants and wildlife, biodiversity, healthy soils, and water quality. We need to protect the spectacular scenic vistas that make the Gorge so special." ▲

# Legal Update

The Friends' Land Use Counsel, Gary Kahn, continues to monitor decisions by the Gorge Commission and the counties. In October, the Friends intervened in two decisions involving the "Special Review Rule." This rule provides that the Gorge Commission and counties can approve development even though the development violates the Management Plan and Land Use Ordinance. The Friends has filed lawsuits challenging the Special Review Rule as inconsistent with the Management Plan. These lawsuits are proceeding, but the courts have not yet ruled on our claims.

In the meantime, two applicants have invoked the Special Review Rule in their appeals to the Gorge Commission in one case and Skamania County's Board of Adjustment in another case. The Friends intervened in these appeals, which will be test cases for the Special Review Rule. ▲



From left to right: Bob Thompson, chair of the Columbia River Gorge Commission, Art Carroll, area manager, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (NSA), Jurgen Hess, Planning and Design Staff Office, NSA, and Lauri Aunan, executive director, Friends of the Columbia Gorge. Joe Walicki, Friends' conservation director, snapped this photo on a recent tour of Sams Walker Day Use Area constructed by the Forest Service on the Washington side of the Gorge.

## Holiday Gifts of the Gorge

**1995 Columbia Gorge Calendar**  
by Craig Tuttle \$10.95

**Columbia River Gorge Guided Tape Tour** two audio cassette tapes and a map booklet, all you need for a 200-mile guided tour of the Gorge \$5

**New Leaping Salmon T-shirt**  
100% cotton Short sleeve in medium blue, mint green in L or XL only \$14

**Delphinium T-Shirts** (100% cotton)  
Short sleeve in white or cool green (S, M, L & XL) \$12  
Long sleeve white in large size only \$14  
**Delphinium Sweatshirts** \$24  
White in M, L and XL  
Cool green in S, M, L only

**Mariposa and Gentian Designs**  
(limited quantities get yours while they last)  
**Short sleeve t-shirts** small size only (100% cotton) \$12  
**Long sleeve t-shirts** (100% cotton) in small, medium and extra-large \$14  
Sweatshirts in S, M and L \$24

**Gentian Cook's Apron**, one size \$15



### Order Form

Quantity	Item	Description	Size	Price	Subtotal

Subtotal

(\$2 first item, \$1 each additional) Postage & handling

**Grand Total**

#### Ship to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Bill my  Mastercard  Visa Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Friends of the Columbia Gorge, P.O. Box 40820, Portland, OR 97204

# Conservation Director's Report

by Joe Walicki

**T**here always seem to be more projects than time in which to do them. With our new executive director leading the way, the staff is working to assess all of the issues with a goal of concentrating on the most important ones. Here's a brief update on some of our conservation projects:

## Washington State Highway 14 Master Planning Process

With the help of Dave Cannard Jr. of Vancouver, the Friends has been attending the interagency task force meetings that are laying the groundwork for future changes along the Gorge highway in Washington. Some major changes may be proposed, including a proposal to build a new road near Cape Horn. In December or January the task force will release its proposals for the highway. Watch your mailbox for our informational flyer on our vision for the future of Route 14.

## Catherine/Major Creeks (Washington) Management Planning Process

The Forest Service is developing an Open Space Management Plan for these spectacular canyon lands located about 5 miles east of Bingen, Washington. The area is unique and sensitive, and is home to threatened plants and animals. The Friends has attended Forest Service tours and workshops to urge protection for this fragile ecosystem. If you'd like to be on the mailing list to comment on their planning process, write to: Virginia Kelly, Planning Team Leader, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, 902 Wasco Ave, Hood River, OR 97031.

## Sandy River Delta, Oregon

The Sandy River Delta, the "Gateway to the Gorge" in Oregon, is now in public ownership and managed by the Forest Service, which is developing an Open Space Management Plan for the area. Projects which will have an impact upon scenic and natural values include a new I-84 interchange at Lewis & Clark State Park. The Friends is working to ensure the plans protect scenic and natural resources. A draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is due in late November.

If you would like a copy of the EIS, write to

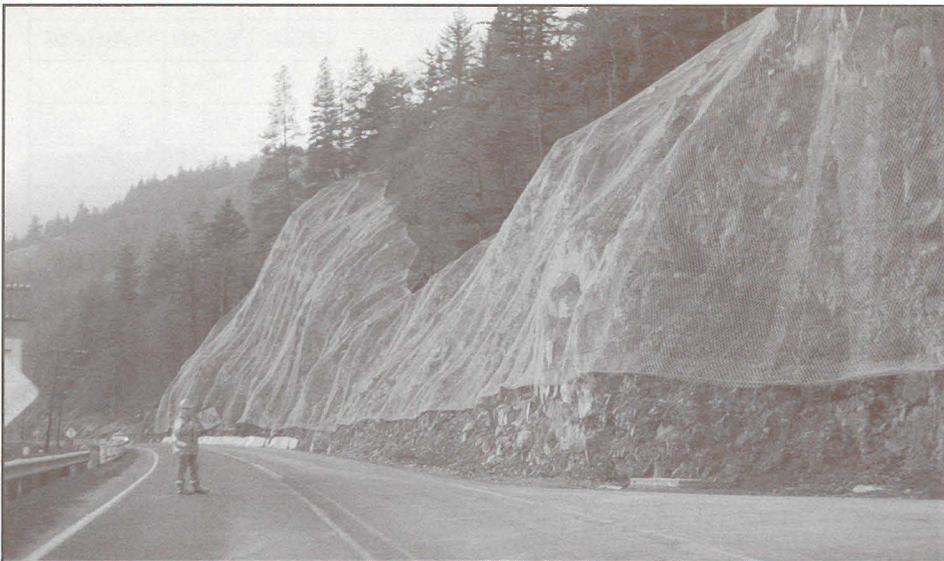
Virginia Kelly (see above).

**"Bonneville Power Administration has issued its "finding" that the plant will cause "no significant impact" to the environment."**

## Bingen, Washington Gas-Fired Electric Power Plant

As reported in the previous newsletter, this plant threatens the air quality of the Gorge. Since then, Bonneville Power Administration has issued its "finding" that the plant will cause "no significant impact" to the environment. The Washington Department of Ecology is likely to issue an air quality permit despite vigorous opposition by the Columbia Gorge Audubon Society, Columbia River United and many local residents.

There are four gas fired electric power plants in active planning stages right now along the Columbia River between Bingen, Washington, Hood River, Oregon and the Portland/Vancouver area. If all of these plants go on-line, we could see a continued deterioration of air quality in the Gorge. We will be reporting in more detail about air quality and the rush to build more power plants in the Gorge and the Northwest in the next issue of the newsletter. ▲



Route 14, Washington, north of the Little White Salmon River. The fencing on the cliff walls prevents rocks from falling onto the roadway. The Washington State Department of Transportation has assured us that they will be painting this fencing to make it less noticeable. The Friends is a key player in the planning process for the future of this scenic Gorge highway.

# Celebrating the Gorge

## Conservator Membership Event

by Nancy Russell

On Wednesday, September 14, the Friends of the Columbia Gorge thanked our major supporters and celebrated the beauty of the Gorge at a "Conservators" event at Brot and Mary Bishop's home near Camas, Washington.

Participants in the Friends major donor program enjoyed canapes provided by FOCG members Shirley and Charles Schubert, owner of The Beaverton Bakery, while feasting their eyes on the panoramic view from Bishop's terrace. FOCG Executive Director Lauri Aunan and Chairman of the Board, Rick Ray, described some challenging projects the Friends are currently working on.

It was a glorious evening; the setting sun sent its beams eastward to pick out the western Gorge cliffs and to light up Vista House. Our thanks go to the Bishops for providing the perfect setting for our event. ▲

### Major Donors Event



*The hostess, Mary Bishop (l) and Emilie Frisbee enjoy the panoramic view at the Conservators event.*



*From left to right: Debbie Craig, Allen Denison, Barbara Walker and Cornelia H. Stevens.*

*Photos by Marie Steinberg*



## Your Bequest to Friends of the Columbia Gorge can Help Save the Gorge for the Next Generation

To explore ways to leave a bequest to Friends of the Columbia Gorge, please complete this form and return it to:

Friends of the Columbia Gorge  
319 SW Washington, Suite 301  
Portland, Oregon 97204

- Please send information on ways to include Friends of the Columbia Gorge in my estate plans.
- Please send information on ways to provide lifetime income to surviving loved ones, after which Friends of the Columbia Gorge will receive my bequest.
- I have included the Friends of the Columbia Gorge in my will.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Office Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

*Friends of the Columbia Gorge wishes to thank the following people who have made memorial contributions since our last newsletter:*

*In memory of  
Barbara Pooley Wilson  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Noyes, Jr.*

*In memory of  
Edward Robertson  
Nancy Russell  
Donald and Susan Cannard*

*In memory of  
Margaret M. Clark  
Elizabeth Martin*

*In memory of  
Jack Roberts  
Maxine Shanahan*

*In memory of  
Elizabeth Langille Trimble  
L.J. and Carolyn Newlands  
Mrs. Bennett Fisher  
Mary Kay Wilson  
Frances Backus  
Mr. and Mrs. Harold D. Mitchell  
Mrs. F.T. Isaacson  
Mrs. Wetherill Collins and Family  
Patricia P. Joynt  
Gilbert P. Joynt*

### ***In Remembrance***

*Ed Robertson, Board Member 1987-90*  
We remember former board member Ed Robertson with great affection. During his three-year tenure on the Friends' Board, Ed was an active and valuable member with an unquenchable love of the Columbia River Gorge and the out-of-doors. To pursue his interest in Gorge hiking trails he left the FOCG Board to found, with his friend Don Cannard, the Chinook Trail Association.

Our fond condolences go to Ed's wife, Grace, and to his children.

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## Friends of the Columbia Gorge

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*Address correction requested*

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## GORGE CALENDAR

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Nov. 8, 22  
Dec. 13, 27

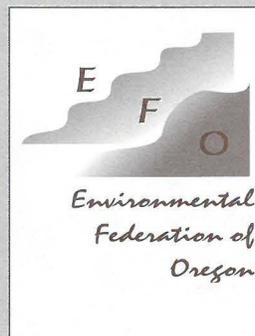
### **Columbia River Gorge Commission**

Gorge Commission meetings are open to the public. They are usually held every 2nd and 4th Tuesday at various towns in the Gorge. This is a good place to find out the details of how the National Scenic Area is managed. Call (509) 493-3323 for exact location and time.

Nov. 25 -27

### **Wild Arts Festival**

Audubon Society of Portland "Celebrating Nature in Arts, Crafts and Books," Montgomery Park, 2700 NW Nicolai St., Portland, Fri. 5 to 9; Sat. and Sun., 10 to 5; call 292-6855.



### **Conservation Comes to Your Workplace**

**N**ow you may be able to help protect the Gorge at your workplace. The Environmental Federation of Oregon (EFO) makes it possible to contribute through payroll deduction to the Friends of the Columbia Gorge and 23 other leading environmental organizations around the state. Since 1989 EFO has raised more than \$1.5 million for environmental work in Oregon.

Fall campaigns are underway in workplaces throughout the state—at Nike, CH2M Hill, Stoel Rives Boley Jones & Gray, Cellular One, the cities of Portland, Eugene, Ashland, and Corvallis and more than 40 other businesses and agencies.

During the fall campaign, please consider designating FOCG as the recipient of your payroll deduction. If your company doesn't yet provide its employees with an opportunity to give to the environment through EFO, call Joe Walicki at 241-3762 to discuss establishing a workplace giving program.