

Chinook Trek #42

Newsletter of the Chinook Trail Association

February 2004

National Recreation Trail Status for Chinook Trail Segment Moves Closer

By MarCine Miller Miles

The Chinook Trails Association received two exceptional Christmas presents in 2003. The first is that letters supporting National Recreation Trail status have been received from Senator Cantwell, Senator Murray, and Congressman Baird together with most of the Southwest Washington legislative delegation and substantial citizen organizations. That was not only a Merry Christmas but also a really Happy New Year.

The second was a meeting at the Forest Service between Tom Knappenberger, Public Information Officer; Dave Porter, Recreation; Don Cannard, activist and spirited leader; and MarCine Miller Miles, Chair of the Recreation Trail Committee.

It was a genuine pleasure to meet with the professionals from the Forest Service and receive their guidance and recommendations regarding the formal submission of the application. They are hard task masters who have strict standards for the Chinook Trail Association to meet, and were simultaneously helpful in their directions.

One of the group who met wanted to begin planning the celebration. The other three focused on submitting the most effective application possible. You will have to guess who did what. 😊

Mission Statement

The Chinook Trail Association (CTA):

- Advocates development of a Columbia River bi-state loop trail;
- Cooperates with appropriate local, state and federal agencies to develop this recreational resource;
- Monitors and participates in route selection, design standards, trail development and maintenance in an ongoing spirit of conservation to preserve the natural beauty of the Gorge;
- Provides information and education to develop public support.

Washington Coast Discovery Trail



The Discovery Trail from Ilwaco to Long Beach, built with an IAC grant, represents a significant contribution for coast hikers. Partners in the effort were Washington and Oregon National Guard units who roughed out the trail and constructed two very attractive long bridges which were necessary.

Leadership Positions Filled

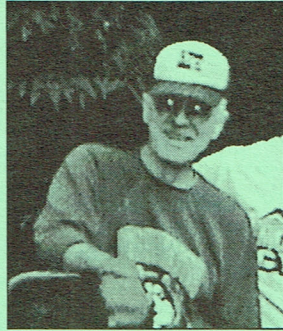
By Roger Anderson

On January 21st, the CTA Board elected two members to fill the leadership positions of the organization.

Our new president will be **Larry Swatosh**, who has served on the Board of Directors and contributed much to the National Recreation Trail committee.

The vice president will be **Roger Anderson**, who has served on the Board of Directors, is project manager for Bells Mtn. Trail, and has held several other positions in the association.

The position of secretary has yet to be filled, however **Bob Scullin** has agreed to serve as interim secretary for the time being.



LARRY SWATOSH
New CTA President
(Photo by Phil Durkee)



Roger Anderson
New CTA Vice-President
(Photo by Phil Durkee)

The Little Rock Cony or Pika

by Don Cannard

How in the world did the rock cony or pika come to live in the Columbia River Gorge at not only Beacon Rock State Park, but up and down the gorge on both sides of the Columbia River? The Forest Service has it listed as a specie of concern due to its occurrence at such a low elevation. The formal name of its genus is *Ochotona*.

Those who are fortunate to have hiked at the higher elevations are accustomed to hearing its gentle squeak and quick ducking for cover. We probably got too close to its harvesting of grasses, herbs and other low growing plants which comprise its diet. Being a non-hibernator, at these high elevations it must 'make hay while the sun shines.' The pika is most active during the daylight hours. Upon close examination you can find its stacks of drying vegetation just waiting for the chill of fall frosts and the cover of snow to provide the nourishment for this small mammal through the winter.

In North America it lives in the numerous shale and rocky slopes of the mountains so familiar to us in the Northwest. It is a colonist in as much as several generations will occupy one slope. However, it is a very territorial animal, chasing away its young as they mature. This generally happens when the harvesting of vegetation gets into high gear for the next winter. Living in close proximity of others however does offer a degree of protection by providing more than one set of eyes to observe predators, avian and mammalian alike. Predators include birds of prey like the red tailed hawk, eagles, accipiters,



The little Rock Cony or Pika is found up and down both sides of the Columbia Gorge.

River Gorge is not the only place in its area of distribution where it is found at a low elevation. Nor is it always found in rocky terrain, as we are accustomed to finding it. In Russia it is found at low elevations in grassy rock-free meadows.

The next time you hike in the Gorge ponder how the little pika came to be separated from its cousins at higher elevations and in other continents. Oh, by the way, if you solve the puzzle you may become very famous.

For those wishing more information on the pika, a great bibliography is the 1997 "The Little Known Pika" by Robert T. Orr, author of Macmillans *The Animal Kingdom* and *Animals in Migration*. Bet you thought I traveled the world over to bring you this information. ☺

Tidbits

- ★ **Did** you know that this year marks the fortieth anniversary of the National Wilderness Act and the twentieth anniversary of the Washington State Act?
- ★ **Sue** Cannard was hospitalized during the holidays. She is making a good recovery. Don and Sue also moved to a new residence at the same time.
- ★ **Ask** Bob Scullin, CTA tool steward, to tell you about his recent experience during the big snow.
- ★ **Travelling** man Vern Swain purchased a well-designed van which he already has used extensively. During February he will be travelling through Southeast Asia, but not in his van. ☺
- ★ **Kudos** to Fred Rogers for his many hours volunteered in the annual "Walk and Knock" event. This next year he will assume a leadership role in this program that feeds Vancouver's hungry.
- ★ **We** apologize that the CTA web page has been down for several months. We regret the inconvenience. We are in need of a volunteer with web master experience since this mode of communication is increasingly being used by members.

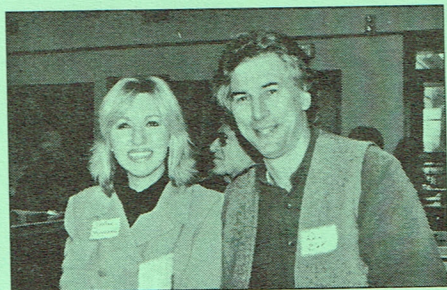
coyotes, foxes, bear, weasel and many other kinds of critters who depend upon flesh for their survival. Two to four young are born in late May or early June. A second litter may occur in July.

The rock cony or pika has a specific distribution. It can be found in North America and Old World species can be found on the continent of Asia from Siberia to the high mountains of Manchuria, western China, Tibet, Mongolia, and the central portion of the former USSR. The Columbia

15th Annual Meeting Report

CTA marked fifteen years of trail building on November 2nd at the Annual Meeting held at the Vancouver Water Education Center. Paul Cannard, who ably served as Master of Ceremonies, kept the program moving. The talented members of the Vancouver Old Time Fiddlers provided wonderful entertainment with lively fiddle music that might have been played at the time of the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

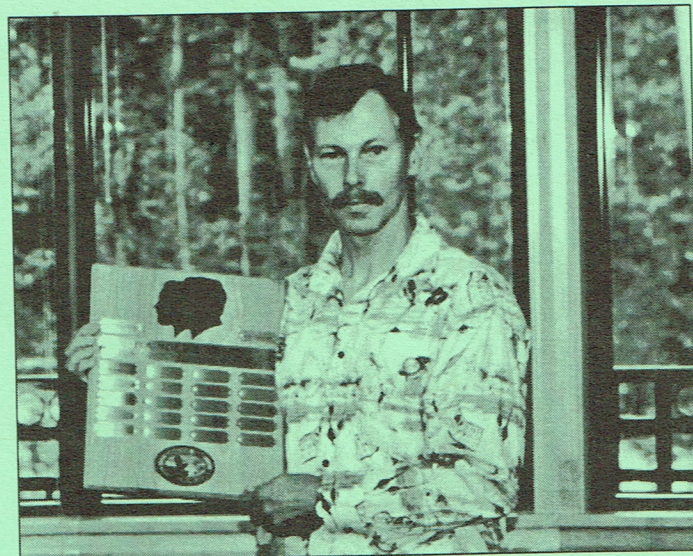
Author Rex Ziak was the featured speaker at the meeting. Rex wove a fascinating tale of Lewis & Clark, captivating the audience with the explorers' incredible journey as they walked and paddled the lower Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean.



Author and featured speaker Rex Ziak, shown here with JoAnn Mitchell.

(Photo by Phil Durkee)

Don Cannard presented a short progress report on CTA 2003 projects: the trail work at Beacon Rock State Park, plans for a connector trail from Bluff Mountain east of Silver Star to the Pacific Crest Trail; and the CTA application to the USFS for National Recreation Trail status for the completed 29 miles of Chinook Trail constructed from the Hantwick Road trailhead (Lucia Falls) to Bluff Mtn.



Roger Anderson with his Founders Award.

(Photo by Phil Durkee)

CTA's most prestigious award, the Founders Award, was given to Roger Anderson for his dedication and commitment to the construction of the Bells Mountain Trail. Previous recipients of this award have been Don Cannard, Grace Robertson, and Ted Klump.

During the luncheon, which was catered by C&L Catering, an award was also presented to Marco Maciel for his diligent work serving as CTA treasurer for several years.

Your dues help CTA to continue its vital work. Use the enclosed envelope to mail in your contribution. Thank you!

Annual Retreat Scheduled for February 14th

by Roger Anderson

The Chinook Trail Association will hold its annual retreat on February 14th from 9 to 5 p.m. at the Marriott Residence Inn, 8005 N.E. Parkway Drive in Vancouver near the Westfield Shopping Mall. We will be meeting in the Corporate Board Room. Lunch will be brown bag or on your own at nearby restaurants. The retreat will focus on community outreach and board development.

This year we would like to extend an invitation to all interested members to join the Board of Directors in helping to plan our year's agenda. Mark Veneroso, an experienced facilitator, will guide the meeting, which he has done in the past for the CTA. He is quite familiar with the board and overall work of the CTA.

President's Message

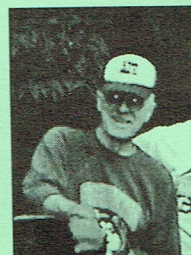
By Larry Swatosh

The year 2003 was really productive for the CTA. Two major projects—although not quite completed—had the majority of effort expended in 2003. They were the Bell's Mountain Trail and the submission of the application for National Recreation Trail designation for that trail segment. The trail construction project still has just a couple of minor bridges and culverts to be installed. That leaves only the "shovel" work left to complete the tread. Favorable bidding allowed us to complete the two major bridges well under budget. This provided surplus funds which permitted CTA to contract for the construction of a number of the smaller bridges.

The outstanding leadership of Marcine Miles and great graphic support by Phil Durkee led to the production of a beautiful color brochure which supported CTA's application for National Recreation Trail status. In addition, the National Trail Committee spent many hours "lobbying" local and not-so-local political groups and agencies for their letters of support. This is an ongoing effort but hopefully it is all just i-dotting and t-crossing from this point on.

I think our challenge for the coming years include two major goals: We need to redouble outreach to increase our general membership and we must broaden the membership of the board of directors. In the past few years the greatest emphasis on trail building has occurred in Clark County. In the years to come more and more of the work will be in Skamania County and in Oregon. The board must be reflective of this and have much more representation from areas outside Clark County.

I look forward to working with you on these and other challenges in 2004.



**Larry Swatosh
CTA President**

Progress Report on Bells Mtn. Trail

By Roger Anderson

The final helicopter drop of lumber for the Bells Mtn. Trail bridges occurred in mid-October. Approximately ten drop sites were used to stage the lumber and culverts for distribution and installation.

A Larch Mountain Corrections Center crew has been working steadily to construct the remaining bridges and they will also install the culverts. Two bridges remain to be built and about six culverts still need to be positioned.

Later this spring or late winter, the corrections crew is scheduled to complete the remaining project work. Currently they are snowed out of the area. Some trail construction remains, and scheduled CTA work parties for this year will be focusing on final grooming of the trail.

CTA Board Members

Don Cannard, Co-Founder 360-694-4033
 Larry Swatosh, President 360-694-1313
 CTA Business Office 360-906-6769
 Roger Anderson, Vice President 360-254-2371
 Bob Scullin, Interim Secretary 360-834-7892
 Dave Sanks, Treasurer 360-834-6103
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 Bob Scullin, Tool Steward 360-834-7892
 Paul Clare, Newsletter Editor 360-892-8173
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 Vern Swaim Bill Byrd Marcine Miles
 Fred Rogers Susan Saul Michael Dianich

Advisory Board

Bobbi Bindreiff Russ Jolley
 Steve Tubbs Paul Cannard
 Tom Knappenberger Mitch Bower

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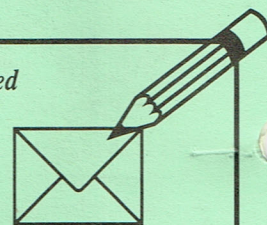
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PLEASE RENEW your CTA membership using the enclosed envelope. Your membership contributions are needed to help defray the cost of this newsletter and to continue our vital work.



CTA Work Parties for 2004

March 20 Bells Mtn.

April 3 Bells Mtn.

April 24 Bells Mtn.

May 8 Kloochman Ridge (Silver Star)

May 22 Bells Mtn.

June 5 *National Trails Day* - Bells Mtn.

June 19 *Hike the Gorge Weekend* - Silver Star and Hamilton Mtn. Hikes lead by CTA

July 17 Ed's Trail (Silver Star Area)

July 31 Bells Mtn.

Aug. 14. Ed's Trail or Bluff Mtn. (Campout?)

Aug. 28. Bluff Mtn. Trail (Campout?)

Sept. 11. Silver Star

Sept. 25. Silver Star

Oct. 2. Hamilton Mtn. (Beacon Rock State Park)

Oct. 23 Hamilton Mtn.

For more information on work parties and trail building events, please call Roger at 360-254-2371 or the CTA office at 360-906-6769.

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**Annual
 Retreat
 Feb. 14th**

More Info Inside!

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