



CTA in an “Interesting” Year

We live in “interesting times”. As Charles Dickens writes in [A Tale of Two Cities](#), “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” Although 2020 may seem devoid of “best times”, it is a year when change lies over the horizon beckoning us to “come”. For the Chinook Trail Association, 2020 was first notable when we canceled our annual gathering and meeting. Assuming we would be able to reschedule later in the year, we expected life to return to “normal” pretty quickly.



Ah yes. NORMAL. Whatever that means! Now we speak of the “new normal” as if we already know what the future will hold.

Of course, we ‘know’ some things about the future. We know there will be trails to build and maintain, and people out hiking, backpacking, trail running, mountain biking, and generally out and about in our beautiful Pacific Northwest.

Remembering there is no “bad weather, just bad gear” the following thoughts come from Steve Jones, our Board President:

Friluftsliv

Text by Steve Jones



Steve Jones' Igloo

Have you heard of the Norwegian term Friluftsliv, pronounced free-loofts-liv? It means “open air life.” It was invented and popularized by Norwegian poet Henrik Ibsen in the mid-1800s with his poem “On the Heights”. The hero of the poem spends a year in the outdoors deciding if he should take over his father’s farm as family and friends expect him to do, or to live the free life of a hunter. After trekking for a year, he decides to embrace outdoor living.

That is the idea behind ‘friluftsliv’: spending a lot of time outdoors and away from electronic technology. Embracing the idea of friluftsliv can help you this fall, winter, and in the years to come. This Norwegian practice promises to make the current pandemic’s colder months more bearable by inspiring us to get outside.

For example, in Norway, Alexander Read and his four-year-old daughter have spent more than 300 nights sleeping in a tent and taking a one-and-a-half-month-long winter trek (which in Norway is not so outlandish).

Alexander is quoted saying “It’s the most natural thing for me because I’m Norwegian.” Their trips and photos are posted on Instagram and at www.visitnorway.com.

A positive attitude and proper clothes for the conditions are keys to successful outdoor adventures. This summer, people around the world have shifted life outdoors. Americans have suddenly become obsessed with camping. In the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius, streets and squares have turned into open-air cafes. Teachers in the mountains of Kashmir took their students outside where classes were held in the shadow of rugged Himalayan peaks.



But the fall and winter rains are coming to the PNW and they will bring new challenges. Many people are now contemplating risking infection at indoor gatherings or spending long, cold, and dark months in relative isolation.

Practicing Friluftsliv can offer the alternative of socially distanced outdoor gatherings, walks with friends, picnics, a bike ride, walking the dog no matter the weather or even gardening. This can also be a good time to take a break from cell phones. Try turning them off during your time outdoors.

Friluftsliv may help explain Norway’s enviable ranking among the world’s happiest places. In the UN’s 2020 World Happiness Report, Norway is ranked number 5. Many studies have shown that time spent outdoors enhances our mental, emotional and spiritual health. According to a 2019 article in the journal *Nature*, spending just two hours per week in local, regional, or national forests and parks increased the feeling of well-being.



The concept of friluftsliv provides another advantage during a pandemic because scientists believe the virus spreads more easily in closed spaces. The benefits go beyond just putting us in a good mood. Spending time outdoors has shown to help heal the kind of sadness and trauma that COVID-19 spreads through communities. In the past, large disease outbreaks left many with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For people traumatized by COVID-19, friluftsliv could be an effective treatment. Military veterans dealing with PTSD have found nature-oriented activities help them cope.

Get the correct gear for the conditions and change your mindset to a positive outlook on the weather. See the opportunities of the season and talk about things you like about winter. Vocalizing positive thoughts can change your outlook. Take small steps by going on brisk walks on blustery days or bundling up for a picnic in the park. Consider bringing meetings outdoors and remember to practice social distancing and mask wearing. If you have access to wilderness areas, seek them out. Time in the snow can change our perception of the weather from gloomy to dazzling. If you can’t get out of town, find pockets of nature in the urban landscape. (The Chinook Trail provides urban as well as back country experiences).

Get geared up, open your door, step outside, take a deep breath and say “I’m going friluftsliving. (free-loofts-living)”

Speaking of appropriate gear for conditions, remember, one of the “perks” of CTA membership is the chance to shop at the Columbia Sportswear store (details on page 4).



is a community effort to raise funds for SW Washington non-profits. Counties benefiting from the 7th year of this event include Clark, Cowlitz and Skamania. In 17 hours on September 24, Give More 24 blew past its goal of raising \$2 million in 24 hours. That is double what was raised last year by 5 pm. (See the article in *The Columbian* for September 25 for more information)

For the first time the Chinook Trail Board joined the fun. Thanks to the efforts of Board President Steve Jones, we raised over \$4800 to advance our vision for our 300 mile loop trail.

If you missed this effort, you can still **contribute** to the CTA (**and/or renew your membership**) through our Paypal account or by sending a check to Ted Klump, CTA Office Manager, PO Box 61686, Vancouver, WA 98666.



See enclosed return envelope for membership details

Pursuing the Vision of Trails

By Steve Jones

Much work is waiting as we build and maintain portions of the Chinook Trail. This summer, I (Steve Jones), have been exploring possible alternate trails from Bluff Mountain to the Pacific Crest Trail. Also, this October I've joined Jeremy Van Gelder and The Friends of Road 4109 in two work parties in the Silver Star area.



The first work party spread a dumptruck load of gravel on the lower section of Road 4109 and filled in some potholes, eliminating the ruts for a short section of the road.

Then on October 23rd, the Chinook Trail Association again joined The Friends of Road 4109 to create a new water bar on the road and re-block vehicles from the Silver Star Trail. This year off-road vehicles have been using the trails to Silver Star Mountain and the parking lot on Road

4109 has been vandalized by removing signs, pulling up bollards, and winching three barrier rocks into the middle of the parking lot. We worked to move two rocks, dig a trench, and replace a bollard to repair the barrier to off-road vehicles.

This will block access temporarily, perhaps through the winter, but access can't effectively be blocked until the big rocks in the parking lot can be re-incorporated into the barrier. The good news is that with the road repairs made over the past two years it appears that higher clearance all-wheel drive passenger cars can carefully drive to the 4109 road trailhead.

Recently Dick Blackburn and Ted Klump completed replacing the carburetors on our Honda Power Carriers (totes). Dick did the heavy lifting while Ted supervised and offered words of encouragement. This completes the engine and drive train upgrades to all three totes. Besides new carburetors the engines have been gone thru, new cables and new tracks have been installed. They will now be put in storage until next spring. Special thanks to Dick for his work and expertise.

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Membership Perk

The folks at Columbia Sportswear have included us in their program to receive periodic passes to shop at their Employee store. This offer is available **ONLY** to **CURRENT MEMBERS** of the Chinook Trail Association. Members will receive periodic invitations to shop at their store in Portland. The invitation allows up to 4 guests to come along for the shopping. **Columbia Sportswear** is one of the premier outdoor gear companies in the world and a responsible corporate member of the Pacific Northwest outdoor community. Discounts typically run 40 – 50%.

The Chinook Trail was founded in 1986 as a non-profit 501 c 3 organization. The vision of the Chinook Trail Association (CTA) is to assist in the planning and construction of a 300 mile loop trail, encircling the Columbia River Gorge, from Vancouver Lake to Maryhill, Washington and Biggs, Oregon to Portland and then back to Vancouver. The Chinook Trail is in the Washington State Trails Plan, the Oregon State Trails Plan, the Columbia Trails Plan, and Greater Metro trails plan utilizing the 40 Mile Loop Trail. Where and when appropriate the CTA will participate in the maintenance of the trail system.

Our sympathy goes out to the families of board members Phil Delaney and Bob Scullin. Both men lost their wives in recent weeks.