



Issaquah Alps TRAILS CLUB

— EST. 1979 —

Dedicated to engaging the public to preserve, protect, and promote the land, wildlife, and trails of the Issaquah Alps, for future and present generations.

Newsletter of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club

THE ALPINER

August 2020

Hiking with your family is a great way to get outside safely! Check out [this video](#) from [Washington Trails Association](#) and [Latino Outdoors](#) for tips on planning a family hike.

Interested in learning more about the history of the Newcastle area? Join Russ Segner and Steve Williams for an online event about the incredible history and industry of Newcastle, and how you can spot remnants and key locations on local trails. [Learn more and register for the event.](#)

If you are interested in getting involved with the IATC in more ways, please fill out our [volunteer form](#) and let us know what you are interested in.

Mask up!

Please be prepared to cover your nose and mouth:

- When you are **within 6 feet** of anyone not in your group
- When you are in a **busy area**
- When you **go indoors**



#RecreateResponsibly

www.recreateresponsibly.org

National Public Lands Day 2020



From September 19-26th, together with the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, we are encouraging our members to practice LNT and participate in an individual trash clean up. [Learn more.](#)

Meet Kaytlyn Gerbin, IATC's Newest Board Member



Kaytlyn developed a passion for the Issaquah Alps while studying at the UW. She is now a scientist and avid trail runner. Learn more about Kaytlyn and our other board members on [our website.](#)

Opportunity to Support Save Coal Creek

Hannah Wheeler - August 26, 2020

Looking to help make a difference for our [Save Coal Creek](#) effort? Here's one way:

They need volunteers to help spread the word about **Save Coal Creek** by staffing a table at [Red Town Trailhead](#), in the parking lot. You need to provide your own chair and/or table and **wear a mask and keep folks six feet away**. They will provide to you ahead of time, in a clean plastic sleeve, copies of the "Save Coal Creek" (see below) flyer to be handed to folks as they start or return from hiking.

Dates: **Aug 28, 29, 30** and **Sept 4, 5, 6, 7** (pick any one date)

They are asking for just one hour of your time for this activity - your choice of time. (Fantastic if you hand them out before and after your own hike!)

If you are interested in this opportunity- please reach out to Sally Lawrence at [Save Coal Creek's Facebook page](#) for more information. We look forward to seeing you out there!



Gateway to Hiking, History and Nature

A 12-acre parcel in south Bellevue would make an amazing addition to an existing Bellevue park. It has everything – local history, wildlife habitat and open space.

This former home of a coal mining family is wedged between Bellevue's Coal Creek Natural Area and King County's Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park.

If purchased by city of Bellevue, it could preserve open space, increase tree canopy, add a bit of much-needed parking and a focal point for Bellevue's coal mining history, and preserve an actively-used wildlife corridor.

Plan for development. Isola Homes owns the property and plans a 35-home Planned Unit Development (PUD) on half the property (the upland pasture adjacent to Lakemont Boulevard). Because of mine hazards, steep slopes, three creeks and three wetlands, Isola would not develop the 6-acres bordering the south, west and north sides of the parcel. Isola's application for permits is under review by City of Bellevue's Development Services department. A public hearing will be held in future to determine the fate of the property.

Don't we need more housing in Bellevue? Yes. But homes, apartments and condos are being added all over the city. They don't need to be located here, where they would forever eliminate this wildlife habitat, break up the natural connection between the two parks and bury forever a piece of local history.

What can you do? Urge your friends and neighbors in Bellevue to write to Bellevue City Council as well as your local legislators, identifying this parcel as an urgent priority for parks acquisition. Ask them to sign the Save Coal Creek petition started by the Issaquah Alps Trails Club in January 2020: www.savecoalcreek.org

When a public hearing on the development proposal is scheduled, we will contact you and ask you to raise your voice, joining with all those who oppose this development.



Western wood peewee in the pasture (photo Hilary Barnes)



For more information, email the Issaquah Alps Trails Club: contact@issaquahalps.org

More history: Millions of years ago, land plants were buried under layers of sediment and then over time were compressed, forming coal. In 1863 the coal seams in south Bellevue and Newcastle were discovered. They were mined for nearly 100 years and helped fuel the growth of Seattle.



Left: Milt Swanson was a machinist for the coal mining company, and his father and grandfather mined coal here. Their house, still standing on Lakemont Boulevard SE, was originally a mining company house but was extensively renovated.



Right: Still visible from the Coal Creek Trail in Bellevue -- the remains of the foundation of a hotel that served the mining company town.



The Isola Homes property is the tan, roughly rectangular shape west of Lakemont Boulevard SE, under the label "North Fork Falls." Surrounded on three sides by public nature areas, this spot was for 80 years a wildlife corridor between Coal Creek Natural Area and Cougar Mountain. "Save Coal Creek" seeks to turn the tan rectangle into a green one: Preserving this space as parkland will protect the two parks' wildlife and maintain the open space scenery that has existed here for nearly a century.

IATC History Chapter 36 (2016): Lenard, Anderson, Dunphy are New Leaders

Doug Simpson - August 26, 2020



January - March: Kappler Ends 5-Year Tenure

In his last "Report" as IATC president, Dave Kappler cited valuable assets new board members Kirt Lenard and Tom Anderson bring to the club. He also noted the retirement of King County Councilman Larry Phillips after his years of valuable service and support.

Betty Manning passed on September 1 at age 91. She was, of course, Harvey's wife. But Kappler praised her "amazing insight and knowledge not only for IATC, but the North Cascades Conservation Council. She was a strong advocate for conservation and her accomplishments are far greater than most of us know." he wrote.

A feature article cited the life and career of 88-year old Betty Culbert, an IATC member since 1980 as an active hiker and hike leader and a good supportive friend of Harvey Manning. "My life would have been a lot different if I hadn't joined IATC," she stated.

The Trust for Public Land conserved an 800 acre forested parcel surrounding the Middle Fork Road. It is "the gateway to dozens of trails, picnic sites and river access points and an important piece for wildlife habitat."

Rachel Hopkins reported that the club's Facebook program yielded nearly 500 new members, 68% new female followers and 50% in the 30-50 age range, with 90% from the Issaquah area.

John Johnson's article on the old Precipice Trail provided a history of the trail and its importance on Cougar Mountain, while bemoaning the trail's loss due to private property issues.

April - June: Lenard Elected President

Elected IATC president on January 28, Kirt Lenard, the club's eighth president since 1979, will work on the club's budget process and seek to establish an endowment fund. Outgoing president Dave Kappler noted Lenard's commitment to the club's mission and his management skills. Lenard cited the need for broader input and participation from club members.

Kappler "stepped down" to become IATC's Vice President of Advocacy, and Doug Simpson, Jackie Hughes and Kathleen Petty were re-elected to the Executive Board at the annual meeting. New board members elected were Tom Anderson and David Dunphy.

Karen Daubert, Executive Director of the Washington Trails Association, spoke at the board meeting. She noted that WTA improved 180 trails in 2015 with 140,000 volunteer hours. She outlined future projects and cited the importance of its partnership with IATC. "We need each other," she stated. In its 50-year history, WTA "has maintained or protected 600 trails, utilizing 26,000 volunteers with 1.1 million hours of trail work."

The issue included two feature stories about members. One was about the Mechler family, pioneers Yvonne and Tom Mechler, who preceded the club itself by participating in Harvey Manning's "Day of Three Thunderstorms" on Cougar Mountain on May 5, 1979. They were also at the meeting two weeks later where plans for the club - and its name - were developed. Tom was on the Board of Directors the first five years and Yvonne edited the *Alpiner*, a name Tom suggested. Son Matt, hiking often in his youth, became Issaquah's Open Space Steward.

The other story featured Marjorie James, then 70, and her progress in hiking the Pacific Crest Trail. She hoped to hike all 2,650 miles of the trail by her 75th birthday.

July - September: Hazenites Win Scholarships

IATC's scholarship program, the Bill Longwell Memorial Scholarship, had its first two places go to students from Hazen High School, where Longwell was a long-time English teacher. The \$1000 first prize went to David Vaisar and the \$500 second place to Cassandra Slaugh. Excerpts from their essays appear at the end of this article.

Joe Toynbee, jack-of-all-trades for IATC, retired from club participation after 35 years. Called the "Energizer Bunny" by Ken Konigsmark, Toynbee estimated being on 7,000 hikes, leading 500-600 of them for about 27,000 hiking miles. Besides hikes, Joe was one of the Weed Whackers group of trail workers, helped organize the club's hiking program and for years wrote the "Hiker's Corner" column.

Steve Williams explained three changes at the Cougar Mountain park. First, the Clay Pit is no longer in use and is free to become an open meadow with wetland parks; second, seven interpretive signs were added to the Coal Creek area; and third, the Anti-Aircraft Ridge Trail was renamed the Harvey Manning Trail.

New board member Gail Folkins' book "Light in the Trees" was excerpted, describing her experiences as a youth hiking the trails on Squak Mountain, where she grew up.

Two more early club members, Ted and Ann Leiber, recently passed. Steve Williams wrote a tribute about their contributions to Cougar Mountain.

Following are excerpts from the essays by scholarship winners: David Vaisar, first place winner, planned to attend the University of Washington to major in molecular biology. He wrote: "I realized that nature is a place where I can separate myself from the rest of the world and think in a relaxed and undisturbed state of mind." On a hike with IATC's George Potter at Teneriffe Falls, they went "through a maze of little trails and then made their way to complete solitude and eventually to the magnificent falls..."

Cassandra Slaugh, second place winner bound for Brigham Young University, wrote: "Recently, I gained a new appreciation for both breathing the fresh air and the effort behind the fresh-cut trail." On a trail work project, "I perceive a sense of daring among the workers. No job was too difficult for any

individual or that could not be shared by the group."

October - December: More Manning Honors

IATC founder and icon Harvey Manning was honored June 29 at a ceremony announcing the renaming of the Anti-Aircraft Peak Trailhead to the Harvey Manning Trailhead and the Anti-Aircraft Ridge Trail to the Harvey Manning Trail. Many prominent political leaders including Larry Phillips, Randy Revelle and Reagan Dunn, all significant promoters of the Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park, were on hand for the dedication.

Vice President of Advocacy David Kappler reported on ongoing acquisitions and trail projects, including the Highlands, trail connections on both sides of SR-900 and Tiger Mountain access points.

After over a dozen years of service, Jackie Hughes stepped down as club treasurer. President Kirt Lenard and Monica Poinescu were handling the club's finances temporarily.

Club presence on social media, especially Facebook, has been growing under the leadership of George Potter and Tom Anderson.

IATC lost another historic member with the June 8 passing of Ron Howatson. Howatson was a key member of the legendary Weed Whackers group and led hikes, notably of the 16-mile Tiger Mountain Trail.

New hike leaders in 2016 were *Tom Anderson, Gail Folkins, Kirt Lenard and Cornelia Remy.*

Advocating for Urban Forest Protection in new Green Issaquah Program

Hannah Wheeler - August 26, 2020



The City of Issaquah recently announced plans to develop a [Green Issaquah](#) program to "build upon existing city-wide community stewardship efforts and foster long-term support for restoration and maintenance of Issaquah's parks and natural areas."

This partnership with [Forterra](#) provides an amazing opportunity for the city to make a concerted effort to protect the urban forests in Issaquah. They are currently conducting a forest assessment to better understand our area's stewardship needs.

The Issaquah Alps Trails club fully supports this effort, and is excited to see this major step forward to take action to protect urban forests. Our VP of Advocacy, David Kappler, writes a letter to the parks board commending this decision, and calling for even further action to coordinate with multiple land owners to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

Read the letter below.

Dear Members of the Park Board:

I am writing this as a personal opinion, the Issaquah Alps Trails Club will be composing a more comprehensive response and I am sure I will have more to say as this progresses along.

This issue is very timely and the city has taken a big step forward. The need for action has become greater as invasive plants such as holly and ivy are more common, die back problems with big leaf maples, sword ferns and western red cedar trees on city property are also becoming more common.

Our city forested areas come right up to state DNR lands, two state parks and county parks on Cougar and Squak. There are owned lands and easements for utility corridors through city lands which have significant management issues especially with invasive plants.

Recently, I have been working on a couple of trail connection issues that King County Parks is pursuing. While doing field work in scouting out options I have been crossing city park property, city public works property, Talus developer retained property and Talus HOA property and have found significant invasive plants on all types of ownerships.

Beyond city park property we need to work with our public and private land owners both in and adjoining the city.

There are significant natural features often associated with wetlands, creeks and steep slopes that are owned by our public works department or HOAs that lack management.

Yes, I am proposing a bigger effort than just the city owned urban forest lands, but without a significant effort on those non city park lands long term protection and enhancement of our city forest lands is not possible.

David Kappler

The Apparatus

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Harvey Manning

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