
COULEE CORRIDOR BYWAY BEAT

Volume 3. Issue 1

Coulee Corridor Consortium – Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway January 2014

CCC Hires Designer For Kiosks

Denis Felton, Coulee Corridor Consortium Kiosk Committee Chair, announced that a graphic design team from out of state has accepted the appointment to develop up to 14 kiosks along the Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway. The CCC committee reviewed eight bid applications from states across the western U.S. and after careful consideration, chose Conservation By Design, a group based in New Mexico. Their team will be working closely with the CCC leadership in the coming months to assemble kiosk content in as many as seven communities along the byway.

The CCC has funds from a national scenic byway grant to develop community kiosks throughout the Coulee Corridor Scenic Byway. Contact any one of the board members to find out how your town can participate.

Marking the Ice Age National Geologic Trail

Back in 2009, President Obama signed into law The Omnibus Public Land Management Act which included designation of the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail.

Though funding has not been appropriated to fund developments along the trail, a foundation statement has been developed that is part of the overall management plan. Four elements included in the preliminary document are statements of purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values and primary interpretive themes. Regional committees are addressing these categories. A core committee met with agencies and stakeholders in 2011 to start work on these elements.

CCC Supports 21st Century Grant

By Linda Bryant-Hillman, 21st Century Grant Coordinator

The 21st Century New Horizons Grant, administered by NLA Group was awarded to the Ephrata and Soap Lake School Districts for the next five years. This grant is for academic enrichment, community and parent participation education in working with before and after school programs in those districts. The goal is to reach 400 students each year or about 80 students per school. The following schools were chosen to participate: Ephrata Grant Elementary, Columbia Ridge and Parkway, Soap Lake Elementary and Soap Lake Middle/High School.

The New Horizon Grant includes a Community Partnership element supported by the Coulee Corridor Consortium to engage students with science based projects that may be tied to technology, engineering and math.

Site directors at each school are gearing up to begin involving students in the Coulee Corridor sponsored FSI (Flood Scene Investigator) project being assembled, coordinated, and promoted by CCC Chairman, Tim Alling.

The project will evolve in stages with monthly updates at the meetings with project reports by students and 21st staff. Stay tuned for progress on student and staff activities.

A core committee met with agencies and stakeholders in 2011 to start work on these elements. Among the accomplishments to date are establishment of local committees to come up with approaches to marking their respective routes and to establish sites for sign placement. One of the subgroups is developing a logo.

Once a logo is selected, state and county approval along the route will need to be obtained for the sites of each of the signs. After that, those wishing to put up signs will need to have county approval for other than state highways.

To get involved or for more information, go to the September 2011 Draft Foundation Statement www.iafi.org/pdf/NPS. Locally, the person to contact is Richard Honey, who is on the Inter-agency Coordination Committee at the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation in Ephrata at 509-754-0200 or rhoney@USBR.gov. Honey is working with the agencies involved in the area near Grand Coulee Dam.

The local Soap Lake Chapter of the Ice Age Floods Institute chapter meets the 2nd Sat of each month at 11 am at the Soap Lake Senior Center followed by a hike. Though there is no January Meeting, the March meeting will be in conjunction with the Othello Sandhill Crane Festival.

Mark your calendar for the annual **Othello Sandhill Crane Festival** set to fly March 28-30, 2014. The Festival will feature education classes, partner displays and featured banquet and bus tours to see cranes in the fields near Othello on the south end of the Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway.

The festival celebrates the Pacific flyway of Lesser Sandhill Cranes that stop in the area to feed and rest before continuing on to nesting sites in Alaska, Northern Canada and Siberia.

The sandhill crane festival offers a variety of fun, education and entertainment for the whole family to enjoy. Through the festival there are opportunities to take guided tours to view cranes, find prime birding habitats, travel to the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge, Palouse Falls and learn about the landscapes and geology of the area. Participants can attend lectures on such show stopping topics as the McBones Mammoth Dig, Conservation of Raptors, and Ice Age Floods just to name a few. There are children's programs, an art show, 4-H demonstrations, and vendors representing a wide variety of organizations. The Othello Community Museum will be open especially for the crane festival (10AM-5PM) at the corner of 3rd and Larch in Othello.

The featured speaker for the Crane Festival Saturday night Banquet and Silent Auction is Noah Stryker. His topic for the evening is "Bird World".

Take advantage of this great event in Othello. For additional information check out the website at:

www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org.



Byway Beat Briefs

American Roads Magazine has a quarterly promotional ad and map of the Coulee Corridor NSB driving tours. During the last quarter, 2013, there were more than 16,000 downloads which reflects well on Coulee Corridor Consortiums efforts to publicize activities along our byway.

Small Cadre of Dedicated CCC Members

A list of current members who support efforts of the CCC can be viewed on the web site at www.couleecorridor.com. Be a supporter and join! Colorful Coulee Corridor pins and commemorative coins are for sale at the monthly meetings.

Adopt-A-Highway Trash Cleanup near Lake Lenore is yet to be scheduled for a Saturday in March or April, 2014. This activity will be determined at a mutually agreed to day and time at one of the next CCC monthly meetings.

Washington Scenic Byway Guide and Tourism Guide, in which the Coulee Corridor is prominently displayed, will be published both as hard copies and be available on the internet. As many as 200,000 hard copies will be printed and will be available for free distribution throughout the state and the world early in 2014.

Coulee Pioneer Museum in Electric City is open for public viewing. Its winter hours are irregular so appointments can be made for private viewing by calling (509) 631-0303.

Articles for April 2014 Byway Beat
Submit articles to Birdie Hensley or Mark Amara by March 15, 2014.

Newsletter Editors

Mark Amara *Birdie Hensley*



WINDMILL FOLK ART GRACES GRAND COULEE AREA

The Grand Coulee area is home to a unique collection of locally made hand crafted miniature windmills. One-of-a-kind metal windmills were created by Emil and Veva Gehrke almost 50 years ago. The Gehrke's colorful windmills were featured nationally in both Columbia Broadcasting and ABC television films, and in the December, 1975 National Geographic Magazine. Gehrke never thought of his windmills as art objects but they are now referred to as Windmill Folk Art. In 1975 many of them were exhibited at Eastern Washington State University, where Emil lectured about them.

Emil and Veva Gehrke came to the Grand Coulee area in 1958. By then, Emil had retired from a career as a millwright at several North Central Washington lumber and box factories. Working with metal came fairly easy to him and Gehrke believed he was the only iron windmill maker in the

country at that time. Emil Gehrke began his unusual hobby of making windmills from scrap iron in 1965. All told, the Gehrke's traveled about 62,000 miles picking up discarded materials to create over 500 windmills, whirligigs, and merry-go-rounds.

The windmills were assembled in the basement of the Gehrke home in Grand Coulee. The windmill paddles were made from everything imaginable including coffee pots, cookie tins, plastic bowls, fan blades, children's sand box shovels and parts of old farm machinery. Most of the turning hubs were made from bicycle wheels. Old metal pieces, scrap iron and nuts and bolts hold the pieces together. There were many sizes with some short varieties while taller ones were mounted on stacks of insulators. After the assembly, Veva would painstakingly add colorful surplus paint. Emil would often explain "balancing is the secret, and you have to make them in a place where there is no wind." All the windmills turn though some with heavier wheels require more wind than others. The Gehrke's also renovated old washer tubs into attractive flower planters. Mr. Gehrke said: "I wanted to make something pretty for the young people to see. We throw away too much. I like to show that practically any object can be reused."

These creations can be viewed along State Highway 155 just past North Dam in Electric City in Grant County.



Cut here and return with your membership materials

The Coulee Corridor Consortium wants your help and is asking that people consider becoming 2014 members of the organization which is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization with tax exempt status. Benefits of organizational membership include: supporting the Coulee Corridor Consortium, keeping abreast of and participating in new activities and events sponsored by the Consortium along the Coulee Corridor National Scenic Byway, opportunity to help leadership by focusing positive attention on the corridor, participation in Big Event fundraiser each year, be placed on mailing list for quarterly newsletter, and receiving increased member visibility on the Coulee Corridor website.

- \$15.00 Individual Membership Fee
- \$25.00 Family Membership Fee
- \$50.00 Business, Non-Profit, or Other Membership Fee
- Other _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Web page listing: _____

Send applications and checks to Coulee Corridor Consortium, PO Box 123 Grand Coulee, WA 99133

Enjoy These Walks in Any Season

By Mark Amara

Anyone who wants to experience some of the natural wonders of the Coulee Corridor can visit any of its scenic landscapes. The lower Grand Coulee has several hikes for walkers of all ages and skill levels. The Lake Lenore Caves (MP 85 on SR17) offers two trail heads. The lower trail is a relatively level ½ mile RT handicapped access trail to a viewpoint along the shores of Alkali Lake. The Lake Lenore Caves trail winds up 31 concrete steps to a high basalt bench with multiple intersections where one can choose to cover a scant mile – several miles as far as anyone wishes to go amongst the basalt cliffs.

Several rock shelters are located close by having been carved by gigantic floods thousands of years ago. Hikers can get a sense of how these shelters were later used by Native Americans who traveled through the area. Hikers may also explore other flood carved benches and coulees in the Lake Lenore area as well as stopping, sightseeing, and walking from many turnouts in the lower and upper Grand Coulee.



Alkali Lake trail



Lake Lenore Caves trail head and view from inside one of the rock shelters overlooking the lakes below

Editor's Note: Coulee Corridor Consortium Meetings are held Monthly throughout the Region

Coulee Corridor Holds Regular Meetings

The public is invited to attend any of these Friday lunch time events to find out what is happening and to participate in events and activities.

January 17, 2014 Time Out Pizza, Ephrata
February 21, 2014 Papaø Casino, Moses Lake
March 21, 2014 Warden

Coulee Corridor Consortium Officers

Tim Alling, Chair

Mark Amara, 1st Vice Chair

Ken Caylor, 2nd Vice Chair

Birdie Hensley, Secretary

Barb Caylor, Treasurer

Get Involved With Coulee Corridor Consortium Committees:

National Scenic Byways

Marketing

Grants

Fundraisers

Newsletter

Memberships

Website

Contact the Coulee Corridor at

www.couleecorridor.com OR

[Call \(509\) 634-1608](tel:5096341608)