

Spring 1988

The Planet, 1988, Volume 09, Issue 01

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Koon, Heather and Associated Students Environmental Center, Western Washington University, "The Planet, 1988, Volume 09, Issue 01" (1988). *The Planet*. 1.
<https://cedar.wvu.edu/planet/1>

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The planet

SPRING '88

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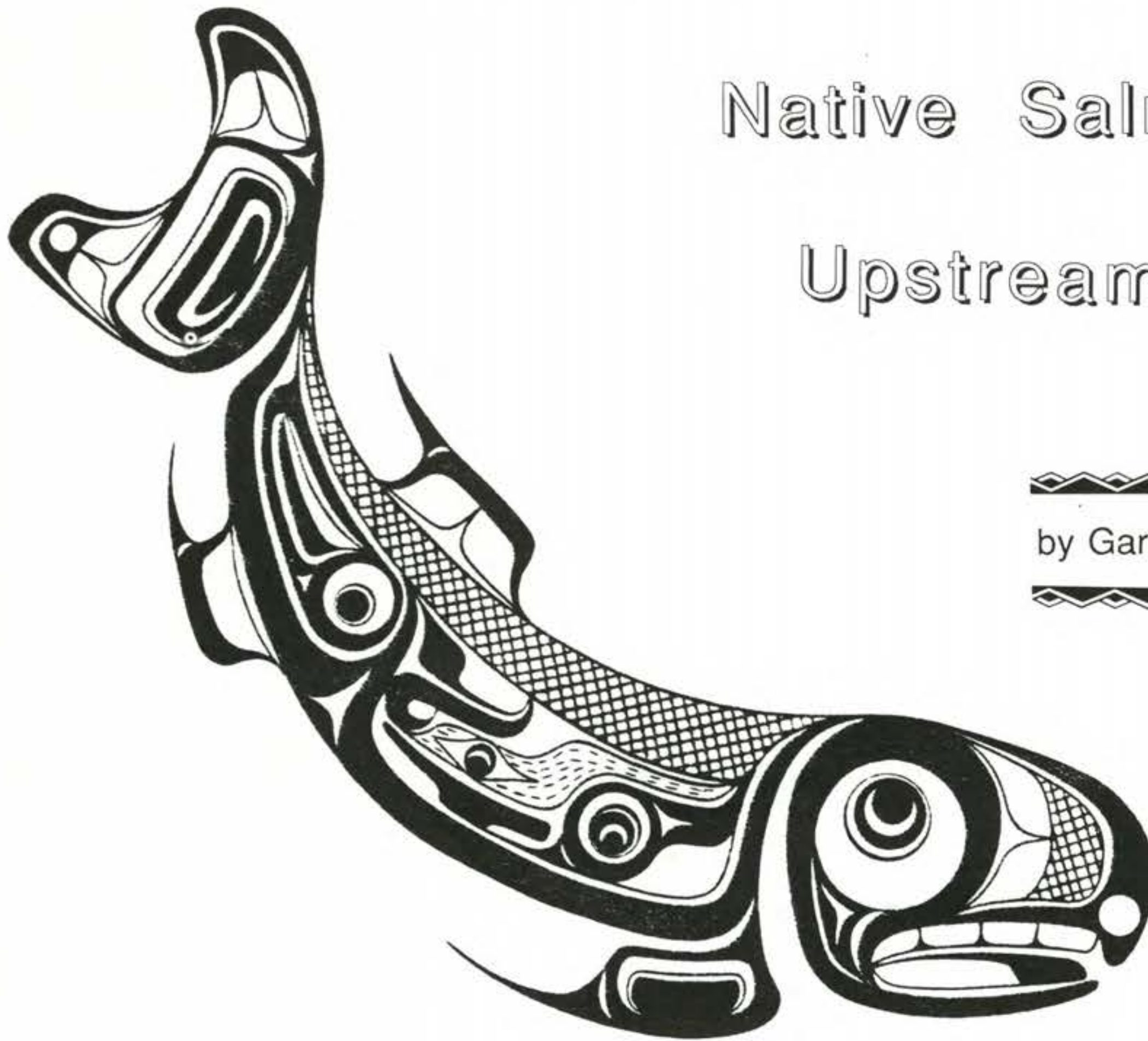
Vol. IX, No. I

Gary Koch

The Planet is published quarterly by the Associated Students Environmental Center at Western Washington University. We at The Planet recognize that environmental issues concern everyone. Let us know what you would like to see in The Planet; reader participation is invited in all aspects of the publication.

Heather Koon, Editor; Lisa Friend, Lay-out Editor; Aaron Coffin, Kennan Harvey, Gary Koch, Annette Zukowski, Staff; Michael Frome, Faculty Advisor.

Cover Photos by Gary Koch: front, "The Free Climber" carved by Jack Richardson, Squamish, B.C. Back, waterfall alongside Fragrance Lake Road.



Native Salmon Fight

Upstream Battle

by Gary Nevan

It wasn't long ago; around the turn of the century they numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Now, they struggle for survival.

The Pacific Coast native salmon population has been significantly reduced in most Western Washington rivers. In some extreme cases, they have been eliminated all together.

Hatchery-bred salmon are now the dominant run on most Washington rivers, including the Nooksack, where the native salmon account for only a fraction of the total return each year.

It wasn't long after the advent of civilization in Whatcom County that the native salmon numbers began to dwindle on the Nooksack River.

After Bellingham's tremendous growth period of the 1880's and 1890's, and subsequent financial depression, the region needed a shot in the arm to stimulate the local economy. Salmon

processing became the answer to the area's economic woes. The world's largest salmon cannery operated in Fairhaven from 1900 to 1910, shipping more than five million one-pound cans of salmon to Europe and Asia annually. Salmon processors located in Bellingham Bay filled their bins with what must have seemed like an endless supply of salmon from the Nooksack and Samish rivers.

Pacific American Fisheries quickly left town after nearly depleting the salmon supply by using stationary fish trap methods, which was later outlawed. In a classic example of greed and ignorance, the Pacific wild salmon population was reduced to significantly smaller numbers from which they would never recover.

In an attempt to re-establish the devastated salmon run on the Nooksack, private groups established a fish hatchery east of the town of Deming, and set out to artificially

grow salmon. Built in the 1930's, the Nooksack hatchery changed ownership a number of times before finally being rescued by the Department of Fisheries in the early 1950's.

Brian Williams, fisheries biologist for the Nooksack Tribe, believes the native wild stock of salmon on the Nooksack could conceivably become extinct after only two life cycles, equivalent to eight years." At the already low numbers of these salmon, it really wouldn't take a long period of time for them to become wiped out," he remarked.

While Williams refused to specifically blame logging as the main villain responsible for the reduction of native salmon, he did concede that careless and unregulated logging practices near the Nooksack have contributed to the destruction of salmon spawning beds and pollution of the river with siltation and debris,

native salmon

continued from page 1

which chokes off necessary vegetation.

"If man didn't log trees and build roads and depend on salmon as a commercial industry, the fish would do great," commented Williams.

Russell Orrell, biologist for the Department of Fisheries in Mount Vernon, doesn't think the native salmon are in danger on the Nooksack, as they are on so many other rivers in Western Washington.

"I don't see the Chinook becoming endangered," Orrell stated. "I don't think they are bordering on extinction, and with runs from 500 to 3,000 annually, they appear strong on the Nooksack.

"We have programs on the Nooksack for collecting brook stock of native Chinook at the hatchery," Orrell remarked. Orrell, while optimistic about the survival of native salmon admits that logging practices "need to be turned around to get the Chinook and Coho back on a full run."

A heated controversy exists concerning whether hatchery propagated salmon are inferior to the wild native species.

Hatchery Manager Molony feels "it's debatable" whether hatchery salmon are as strong and disease persistent as their wild relatives. "The fish tastes the same," Molony reasoned. "That's what counts."

Biologist Brian Williams sees it another way.

"There's no doubt the native salmon are better suited to survival," he explained. "Hatchery fish are genetically mixed, and once you reduce the genetic pool of wild salmon and mix with other strains, those necessary instinctual survival genes are lost. Hatchery fish are also smaller than natives."

"What's happening is a loss of genetic diversity in salmon stocks," Williams stated.

Direct competition for food is another factor affecting the wild salmon population, says Williams. Research has shown that when large numbers of hatchery fish are released into a stream they displace the fitter, but less numerous wild salmon. Hatchery fish have a relatively poor ability to capture food. This attribute, which is a major difference between hatchery and wild salmon, can be traced back to the hatchery where salmon are raised in an artificial, sterile world.

Man's fascination with genetic engineering is apparent at the fish hatchery.

According to Molony, after the returning salmon are trapped at the hatchery, the eggs from the female are extruded. When approximately 40,000 eggs have accumulated, milt or sperm from the male is stripped and stirred in with the eggs. When the embryos have developed to the eye stage -- about three weeks -- the eggs may be handled and shipped to other hatcheries if necessary. After the young salmon begin searching for food, they are transplanted to rearing ponds where up to 200,000 live and are hand-fed pelletized food. An examination of the feed composition would send shivers down the back of a natural food exponent. In addition to fish meal, cotton seed meal, and other various fish parts, there are also ingredients such as: choline chloride, antioxidant, calcium pantothenate, mandione, sodium bisulfate and pyridoxine hydrochloride.

The salmon are held until they reach migratory age and size, about three months for Chinook and a year for Coho, and then released into a hatchery stream.

Research has shown that the confined hatchery environment quickly establishes behavior patterns in hatchery fish much different from those of wild fish of the same age. Hatchery fish tend to emulate a pack mentality along with increased aggression. The less-populated runs of wild native salmon don't stand a chance against the aggressive mobs of hatchery stock that can remain in fresh water for up to a year. Competition can be fierce, and the results can be extremely detrimental to the wild salmon population.

Because of the Pacific salmon's routine of dying after spawning, many creatures, especially the bald eagle, depend on the rotted carcasses for food during fall and winter months.

Pacific salmon runs have declined to less than half their original numbers along the entire West Coast of North America. Many significant wild salmon runs have been eliminated. Artificially propagated hatchery salmon now claim more than half the remaining fish population in Washington, and the wild salmon population totals less than a quarter of their original numbers before the coming of the white man.

Brian Williams has mixed feelings about salmon hatcheries.

"Salmon hatcheries have a purpose. They produce salmon to fulfill the needs of the commercial industry. But hatcheries are not the answer to the degradation of wild stock," he said. "Instead of just producing more salmon to fulfill commercial needs and to atone for past mistakes, native wild stock should be protected and encouraged to grow. You can't force anything into premature extinction. There's no justification for it."

Adventure Learning;

Students Experience

Spring Block



Practicing games for Outdoor School.
lesson plan.

Below: Preparing a marine

Story and photos by
Kennan Harvey

I snuggled close to the campfire's cheerful blaze, my backside warding off the dark chill of the evening. Icicle Creek roared in the background as run-off from sun-melted mountain snow raced down its narrow bed. My seat was a coarse granite boulder, washed smooth by the water of ages past. A soft needle groundcover, scattered by towering Ponderosa pines, provided a gentle fragrance.

Our discussion for the evening focused upon a passage by John Muir, a profound lover of nature and founder of the Sierra Club. In vivid, powerful style, Muir described his trek through Yosemite to a high mountain peak. The campfire and surrounding night, moon splashed ridges, and raging stream was the perfect setting in which to understand the message of this great naturalist writer. In an environment which so stimulated my senses, I *experienced* the written passages so often reserved for classroom analyzation.

The next morning, a group of students stood at the bottom of a rock cliff called "Bruce's Boulder". Fear, excitement and a puppy-like eagerness radiated from them as they looked up; the ropes dangling down the rock suddenly appeared very thin. After being instructed in proper safety procedures and basic climbing techniques, pairs of students broke away to begin - one to climb, the other to belay the rope for safety.

From my perspective as a facilitator, having had previous climbing experience, I watched from the top of the boulder and reveled in the process unfolding below me. Each climb presented difficulties: a particularly strenuous section, a question of balance or a fear of heights.

As the day progressed, each person met and conquered these challenges in their own personal manner, emerging at the top with a huge grin and shout of relieved joy. Behind each accomplishment, the rest of the group lent a measure of support. The day was a huge success. We all improved our self-confidence and communication skills through the shared challenge of rock-climbing.

Fostered by the belief that

continued on page 13



N. C. I. From Blueprint To Success

by Crystal Jackson



Tom Fleischner

Do classes with names like "People of the Mountain World" or "Cascade Pass: Glaciers and Meadows" appeal to you? How about "Indian Art of the Northwest Coast" or "Drawing from Nature"? If so, you may want to check out the North Cascades Institute, a non-profit field study school operating out of Sedro Woolley.

The North Cascades Institute was conceived in the minds of its two program directors, and its birth proved to be a fascinating story.

Tom Fleischner and Saul Weisburg met in 1973 at Antioch College in Ohio. It was the beginning of a friendship that has lasted 15 years. After Antioch, Tom moved to Olympia to attend Evergreen College. Sometime after, Saul moved to Olympia, and within a few years they and three others came up with the idea of running a collective "school".

In 1980, Tom and Saul both

came to Western Washington University to pursue graduate degrees in biology. After graduate school, four of the original group ended up working together in the North Cascades National Park. The others, besides Saul and Tom, were Ed Grumbine and Tim Jordan.

All had worked in outdoor settings and were united by a common desire to teach field classes. They discovered, however, that none of the established institutions in the Puget Sound region offered the type of curricula for which they were looking. From their refusal to compromise their goals, came the Shuksan Institute.

The Shuksan Institute operated for several years under a state non-profit organization status. Its four directors also worked for other agencies at this time. To become a non-profit agency, the Institute would need to go through a more formal federal process. In the fall of 1984, Tom, Ed, Saul and Tim locked themselves in a cabin for eight hours and formulated a plan for going through this process. They decided to reorganize as the North Cascades Institute.

As with many plans, this one had a hitch on which they had not counted. After several months, the group realized they could not generate enough money to start their programs. Everything was put on hold. Ed and Tim went different directions, while Saul and Tom continued working for the North Cascades National Park.

Eight months later, in the fall of 1985, Saul and Tom were surprised by John Reynolds, the North Cascades National Park superintendent. He approached them with an offer of free rent for office space and salaries paid by the Park Service for a full winter

session of their program. Saul and Tom accepted.

The Park Service's interest was just the boost needed by the fledgeling Institute. In the summer of 1986, they began their first season of operation with a full class schedule. More classes were added the following summer. Although no longer administrators of the Institute, Ed and Tim returned to teach classes and offer a hand when needed.

Even now, as it readies for its third full summer, the Institute operates under collective principles. Saul and Tom share equally the title of Program Director. A Board of Directors consisting of 10 people is also involved in policy-making decisions. According to Tom and Saul, this collectivity is both a benefit and a struggle at times. Since neither one of them holds ultimate responsibility, decisions



Saul Weisburg

need to be discussed until agreement is reached. Both agree that it helps considerably to have a fifteen-year-old friendship on which to base this type of working relationship.

continued on page 14.

by
Anne
Mackie



Gary Koch

Left: Before clean-up. Below:
seaweed-covered stump,
carved by tidal flow.



Gary Koch

Blaine Beach Dump Site Turned into Park

Jim Jorgensen was mad. When the Blaine High School biology teacher heard that the recreational vehicle park might become a permanent facility at Boundary Bay Beach near Peace Arch Park, he moved into action. That was in November 1986. Now, less than a year and a half later, a citizen's task force has beaten the RVs and won City Council approval to restore a section of the city's urban waterfront area that was formerly a landfill and sewage treatment site.

In December the Blaine City Council allocated \$17,000 for the Marine Education and Resource Center to be combined with an additional \$39,000 from the Department of Ecology. With these funds, the restoration project is one step closer in meeting its goal to provide a public area for marine education, research and recreation.

"I see this marine resource center as changing the image of the city," Jorgensen said. "It will give the community a sense of pride and help attract tourists to something really valuable."

Presently, the 11-acre site along Marine Drive is overgrown with tall grass and littered with debris.

A landfill was closed in 1973

leaving behind minimal amounts of methane gas, which Jorgensen said should take little effort to clean up.

The Beach provides habitat for heron, ducks, and sandpipers; and from the shore, visitors have spotted the occasional whale. Lectures and classes will take place inside the Marine Center; and outside, an amphitheatre, trails, and picnic areas will offer visitors a variety of activities. Summer day camps and nature study clubs will provide programs that teach environmental awareness. A viewing platform shaped like a lighthouse will offer a spot to watch sunsets and wildlife.

Jorgensen hopes to use touch tanks, marine science and Audubon displays, aquariums, a salmon spawning pond and a small egg house as part of the public school program.

The task force's proposal to the City Council stressed the importance of creating an awareness in students of the relationship between humans and the marine environment: "We need to stress to young people that we are stewards of our environment, and by taking a direct interest in dealing with these critical issues we will make our community a better place

to live."

Jorgensen hopes students and senior citizens will volunteer to help run the Marine Center along with a small paid staff. Finding enough volunteers in Blaine to carry out the plan won't be difficult if present interest in the project is any indication of commitment -- over 1500 readers receive the task force's monthly newsletter.

The 44-member task force represents diverse community interests, and its 11-member steering committee includes educators, government leaders, recreation directors, business owners and a retired sheriff.

From this diversity comes a common goal: to create beauty out of waste, and to preserve nature for future generations to enjoy.

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Swan Report

by Rich Royston



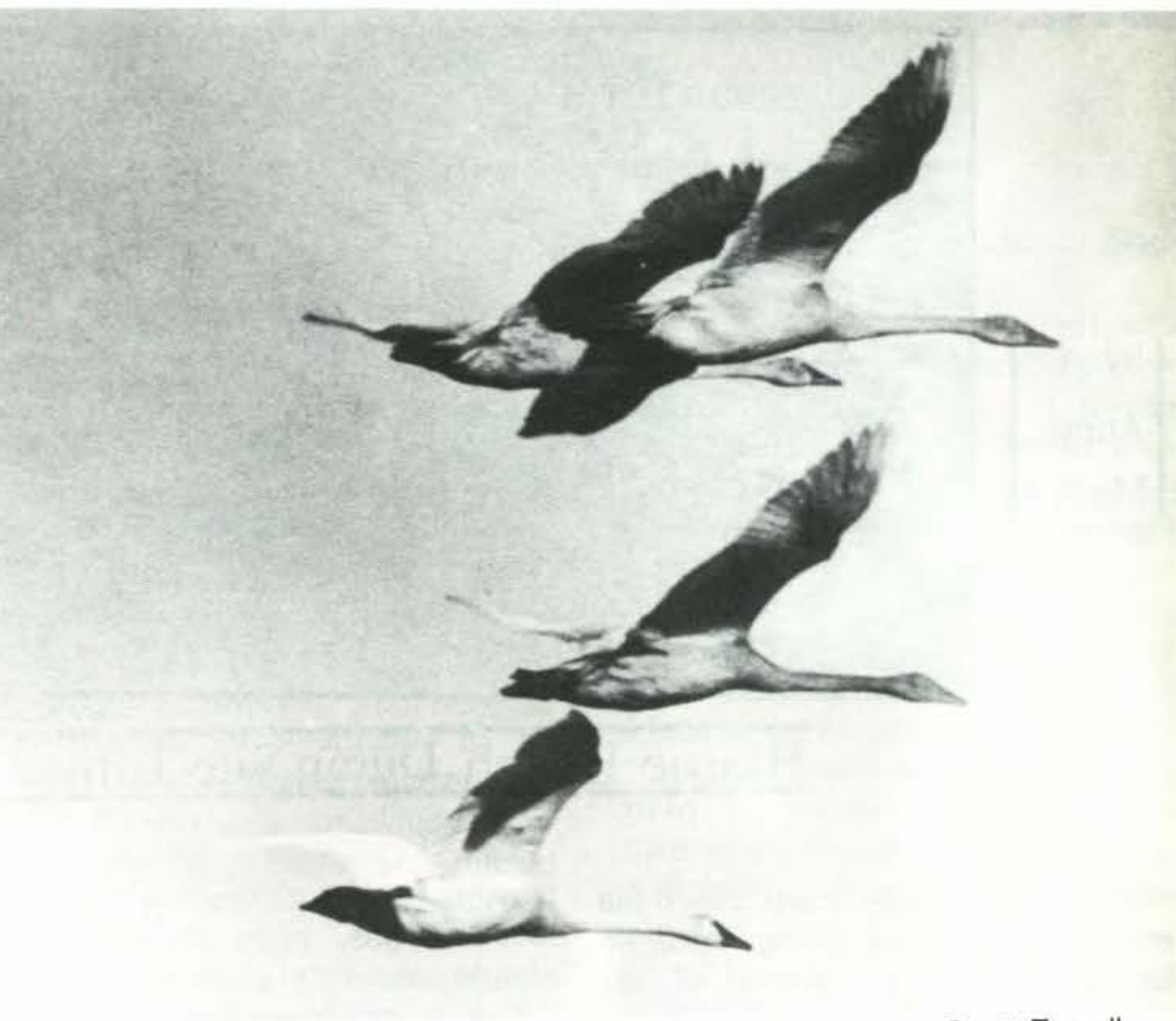
Louis, the voiceless swan in E. B. White's children's classic *The Trumpet of the Swan*, adapted to his problem in an unusual way - he learned to communicate by blowing into a trumpet.

Unlike Louis, Northwest Washington's wintering trumpeter swans faced difficulties coping with their problems this winter. Shortages of food and overnight resting areas, and the continued health threat of poisoning from spent lead shotgun pellets are among the adverse conditions they encountered.

The lingering Northwest drought prevented the refilling of the region's ponds and sloughs. Swans use these open bodies of water as overnight resting areas and to escape predators.

The trumpeter's two continuing health problems are lead poisoning, caused by ingesting spent shotgun pellets, and *aspergillosis*, a respiratory disease brought on by prolonged cold weather. These two

Trumpeter foraging in harvested cornfield. Scott Tercell



Scott Tercell

ailments kill 30 to 35 trumpeters each winter, wildlife biologists report.

The birds' adaptive winter feed - corn and barley harvest leftovers - were also in short supply this winter.

"Historically, trumpeters have been grazers, feeding on pasture lands and aquatic plants,"

said Winston Banks, a retired U. S. Fish and Wildlife biologist who specialized in trumpeters. "Over the past seven or eight years, they have switched to eating corn, almost to the total exclusion of grass. This change is unique to swans in the Skagit Valley."

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KUGS:

Environmental Program Wins First Place In Competition

by Colleen Majors.



Gary Koch
"Ecological Perspectives" crew, Susan Dixon and Colleen Majors.

It's 5 P.M.

The studio is brightly lit and the reel-to-reel is set on "record". Laura, the evening's commentator, waits at the microphone for her silent cue...

"Seals and sea lions provide severe competition for the fishing industry. However, these species are sheltered under the Marine Mammal Protection act. Good evening, and welcome to *Ecological Perspectives*."

Hours later, the labor and creativity of the afternoon becomes a half-hour masterpiece, ready to be aired the following evening. This in-depth environmental program hits the airwaves each Tuesday on KUGS-FM, Western Washington University's alternative radio station. *Ecological Perspectives* entertains and educates our community on environmental issues and events, emphasizing Northwest regional topics.

The show is an attempt to inform the general public on current environmental issues, problems and solutions, while entertaining listeners. Topics range from pressing community issues to recreational opportunities. Past programs have included: sewage sludge on Whatcom County farmlands, John Muir and our

national forests, infectious waste at Thermal Reduction Company, kayaking in Puget Sound, and county-wide recycling.

One of my most memorable programs was an interview with Peter Berle, President of the National Audubon Society. The evening began with Earth First! activist David Helms discussing civil disobedience and forest preservation. At intermission a couple of environmental troubadours, Bill Oliver and Gene Waldon, stopped by, crammed their guitars and bodies

"Ecological Perspectives"
entertains and educates
our community.

into the tiny studio, and sang songs about old growth forests and spotted owls.

Finally, Berle came on and talked about the Society's focus on various environmental priorities such as national forest wetlands, and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He also rationalized why the Audubon magazine is mailed in plastic. It was fun and informal; a night to remember.

In the fall of 1987, the program evolved into a seminar course offered through Huxley College of Environmental Studies. Still in its infancy, enrollment has fluctuated slightly each quarter, with an average of two students per quarter.

While the purpose of the program is to educate the public on environmental topics, we also benefit from our work. Each week we gather much more information than we can use in a half-hour show. We learn about our subjects in-depth, meet interesting and influential community members and enhance our production skills.

We recently entered one of our programs in a five-state university competition. The program, "Undeveloped Lands of Whatcom County", won first place and insured our participation in the upcoming national competition.

These honors bring us recognition, but the real reward comes when the final mix is "a take" and another week's program is completed.

To join us for *Ecological Perspectives*, turn your FM dial to 89.3-KUGS each Tuesday at 6:00 pm. Then sit back and enjoy the show!



A bolt high on the wall.

It looms above us like a vertical sea of cool granite with waves confused, broken and streaked not by wind but yellow and black lichens. We stand at its foot with our necks arched back, gazing at its sheer grandeur in anxious silence. I feel a nagging fear as I try to assess this wall we hope to climb, and compare the few weaknesses I find there to the many I feel in myself.

The wall's shortcomings are not obvious, yet we know they are there, as our proposed route has been climbed before and is listed in the area climbing guide. Just the same, we stare up, mentally rehearsing each pitch, imagining where the hidden ledges are and questioning ourselves. We silently

ask if we have what it takes to climb this thousand feet of near-vertical rock.

The early morning grey is fading from the sky as we struggle to force our feet into stiff climbing shoes. Chilled now from the sweaty hike in, we're anxious to get moving. Packing up what little we have, and with one last look up the length of the wall, we begin.

We scramble up the first easy section to the base of a steep crack in a corner. Scott slings a rack of hardware around his neck and I sort out a rope; within minutes he's climbing. He moves deliberately and powerfully up the narrow slanting crack, stopping occasionally, briefly, to place pieces of protection ("pro"). The pro, small artificial chocks and

expensive camming devices, fit securely in the crack, and Scott clips the rope onto them, confident that they will hold in case of a fall. He moves on up through a short crux, delicately placing his feet on the smooth face and lying back hard against his finger tips which are jammed into a thin seam; then a shallow corner up easier ground to a tree. At the tree, he secures himself then holds my rope via a mechanical belay device. I follow his lead; with a belay from above, there is little chance of a serious fall, so I climb the crack confidently, removing the pro as I go.

One pitch down and ten to go. If they all go this quickly, we'll be on top for lunch. After a short rest and hardware re-sort, I take the lead and head up the next crack.

And so it goes, pitch after pitch, up slippery dikes, steep corners and sleek cracks as we climb the sea. By noon, we're on top of the seventh pitch; lunch is going to be late. The sun breaks over the top of the cliff giving warmth to our cold fingers and making the coarse rock sparkle.

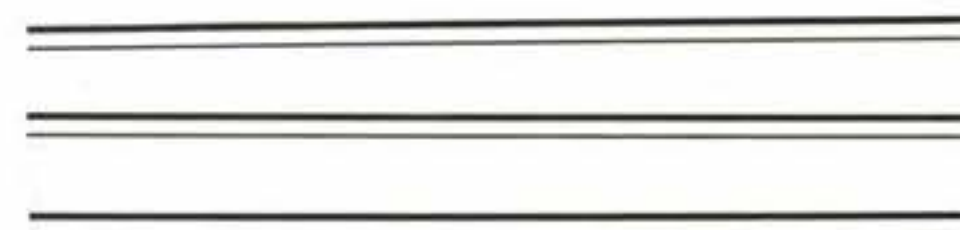
The top of the seventh pitch is a wild place - there is no tree here, nor ledge, or even a crack - a blank, vertical face. But there are three holes drilled in the rock that have been fitted with expansion bolts. It is from these artificial features that we hang, suspended.

There *appears* to be a way through to the right, a little lower down, then left again to bypass this section. But it looks desperately hard. Better climbers than us have tried it, and all have failed.

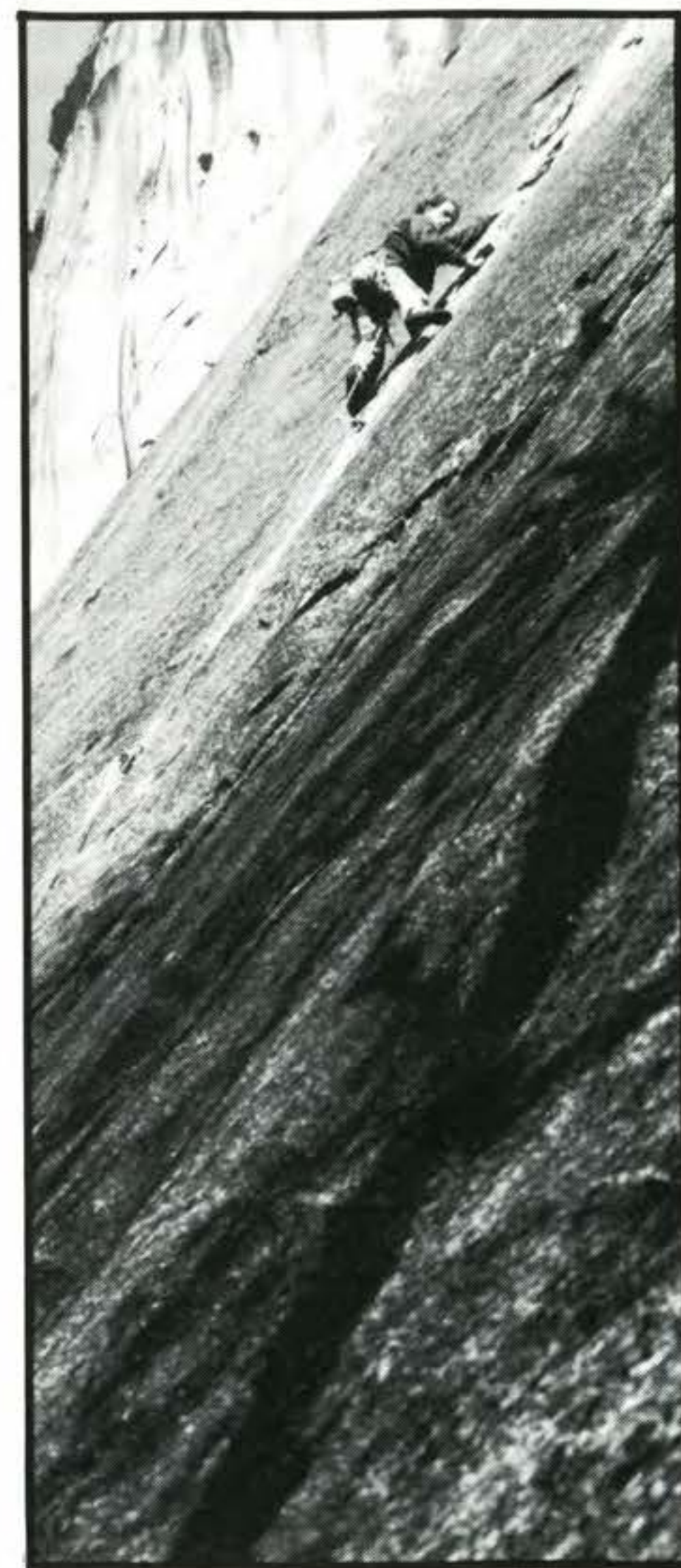
Fortunately for us, the first ascent party, armed with a rock drill, placed half a dozen bolts straight up through the blank section. Without these, we would be forced to retreat back to the ground.

I know that, were I standing on *terra firma*, I would only laugh and question if slamming bolts into a cliff and hanging on them might better be left to those building their own walls. I might even get upset about the attitude that would prompt one to place bolts just to get on top. Even worse, I know full well that it is this very attitude - the blind

continued on page 10.



Opposite above; Kennan Harvey aid-climbing on bolts. Below left; A thin, difficult crack is climbed by the "layback" method. Below: Harvey leads a climb called "Exasperator".



CLIMBING

continued from page 9

pursuit of objectives - that is responsible for the state of the world today.

But here, seven hundred feet above the ground, my sense of ethics has low priority. Up here, I just want to keep from making any fatal mistakes. Bolts then - and the bigger the better - are a welcome sight, and I happily yard on them to overcome what I am not skilled enough to climb.

From the sixth bolt, I glance down on Scott (who is calmly smoking a cigarette) and feel very exposed. He appears an outline among tiny, brightly lit trees far below. "Hey man, have you looked down lately?"

"Yah. Jovial."

Looking back up, I'm faced with another decision. Off to the left is a huge inside corner with a wide crack between itself and the wall. Though reasonably climbable by today's standards, it is questionable if I could do it even when fresh, let alone after seven pitches of strenuous climbing.

As is true of most things, the sport of climbing is ever-evolving. And, as most climbers today view the previously-mentioned bypass route as unclimbable, climbers of not so

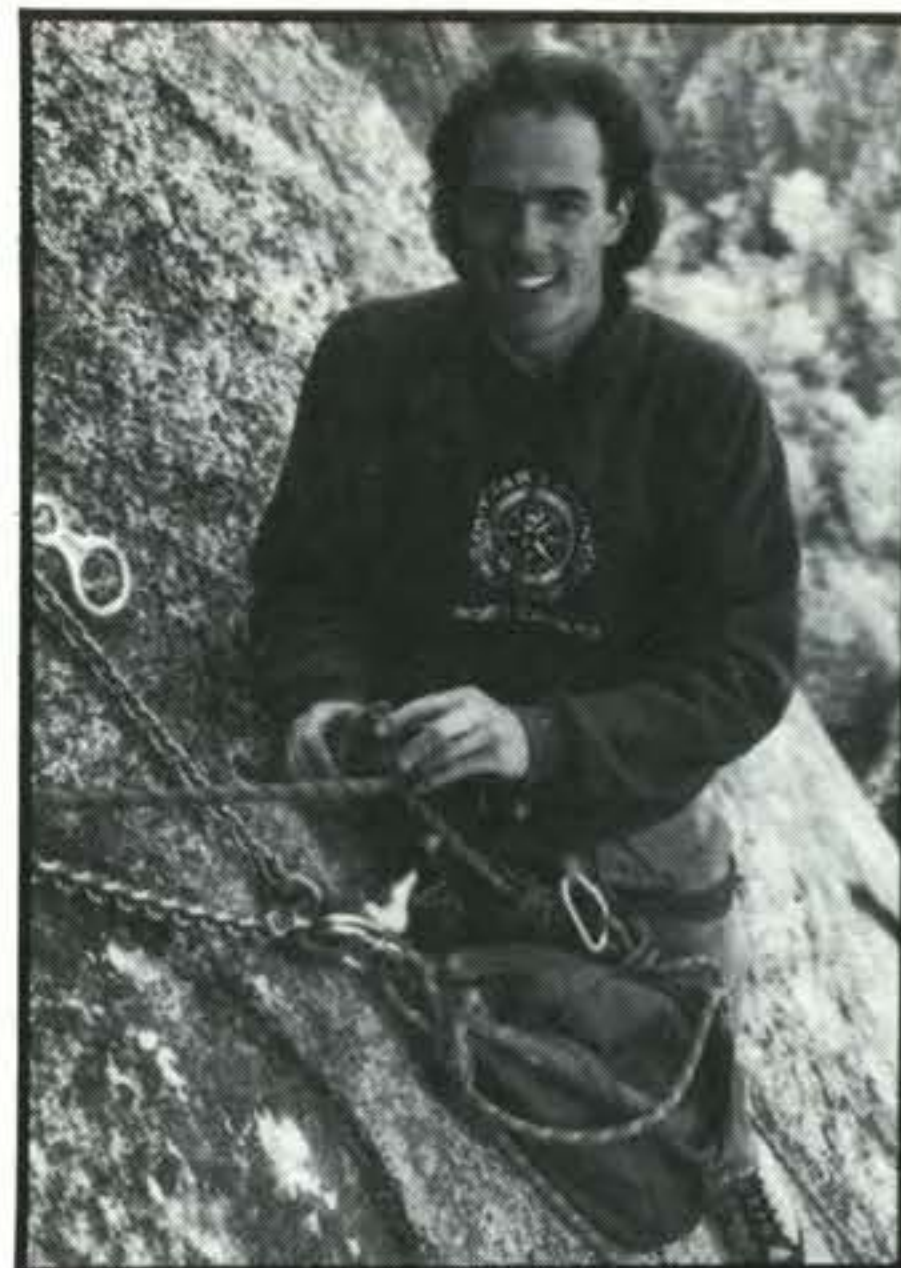
many years ago saw this foreboding crack as impossible. Fortunately for us, again, the first ascent party had continued drilling and bolting straight up the wall. Giving in to the fact that attempting the crack will almost certainly lead to a fall, I thankfully climb the ladder of bolts.

And still there is only the faintist cry from the Ethical Me, claiming that I am reprehensible for crimes against the wall. It's so easy to beat back this feeble waft of virtue while in a state of mixed fear and excitement; my best excuse is that I didn't put the bolts in, I only use them.

If we had chosen to climb the difficult inside corner, we would still have been clipping into bolts for protection since the crack is too wide to accept conventional protection. This concept of using bolts for pro is unique, because the climb is done without using the bolts directly to overcome a difficulty. Instead, they serve only to save a climber from serious injury in the event of a fall.

Even so, I question how many sacrifices should be made to keep an inherently dangerous sport safe or, for that matter, to keep life in general safe. Maybe if we can't handle the heat we should get out of the fire, or off the cliff, or out of the woods rather than leave the marks of our failures for those still to come.

But these are all ground thoughts. I have more important things to think about at present, like "will this bolt hold even my body



"ON BELAY !"

weight?" These bolts are old (1961) and look bad; rusty streaks bleed out of the holes, and the nuts are blobs of rusty metal on the ends of shaky-looking studs.

Yet it holds, as does the next, and finally I reach a ledge where I can anchor myself to belay Scott up.

After another short break, we coax our waning muscles into three more comparatively easy pitches and finish the climb buzzing with exhilaration.

We share a laugh and a hearty handshake, then plop down in the dirt for some relaxation before the descent. Still high on endorphines, we pass the water bottle and gaze out over the wall, soaking up the last rays of sunlight and reveling in our... Victory?

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Seattle Blues

by Aaron Coffin

A few years ago, Seattle residents were basking in the glow of the "Most Liveable City" award. Seattle has been known as a "green" city, and Metro, Seattle's mass transit contractor, had won national awards for its bus system.

Today finds a different picture. Seattle residents are wondering why their attractive city now often resembles Beirut.

Rampant overdevelopment has created mayhem in the city center. Seattle's townish charm is being replaced by huge metallic skyscrapers, jammed freeways, smog and an increasing homeless population.

The biggest disruption has been the Metro bus tunnel. The tunnel's construction involves digging a large pit through the heart of downtown, a project that is not scheduled for completion until 1990. Costing \$500 million, the tunnel is to be 1.3 miles long, from the Kingdome to the new Convention Center.

This may be an insignificant contribution alongside the need for a suburban commuter system to

relieve Seattle's increasingly congested freeways. Five hundred million dollars seems like a lot to spend for only 1.3 miles of transportation, while ignoring a near crisis in commuter transportation.

The necessity of the bus tunnel is questionable. Regular buses seem to be handling current downtown traffic adequately. In fact, the bus tunnel has the dubious honor of being the most costly State project ever to make the Office of Management and Budget's 1988 official unnecessary "pork" list.

Within weeks after its start in June, 1987, the tunnel had achieved obnoxious levels of noise and dust pollution along fifteen blocks of the project's first leg. Pedestrian and vehicle travel was immediately hindered, and parking space was lost. Nearby residents and businesses have been subjected to a constant din of jackhammers.

These elements combine to give the city center a war zone atmosphere.

The history of the bus tunnel project has a weird karma. In November, Metro repaved the streets to accommodate Christmas shopping only tear them up again after New Year's day. This was done to placate upset and worried business owners. Later in January, a worker was found dead in one of the pits, a still unsolved mystery. Then, Metro announced that the wet and sandy soil at the corner of Third and Pine streets might collapse - along with a couple of nearby buildings - if drilled into. Drilling was halted for two months while Metro dug an elaborate system of wells.

The latest episode of the tunnel saga shook the foundations of City Hall. For the past month and a half, City Hall has been trembling due to tunnel activity.

"It's like being in an earthquake", reported one City Hall worker. Complaints flooded into the city administration.

A direct result of the noise and dust pollution created by the tunnel, is the financial hardship suffered by downtown merchants.

see page 12



Chris Jobb

Overall, business is off about 9% since construction began. Some small shops and restaurants along the tunnel route report a 25%-30% loss in sales. Metro claims that direct compensation is prohibited under state law and is only willing to offer loans and eventual cleanup help to affected businesses.

Many small businesses are

in favor of an open space park where Westlake Mall now towers, but feel their views were ignored. In fact, many Seattle residents feel that they have had no voice in urban planning. Projects have been pushed through quickly by the city administration. As one local bumper sticker reads, "It's not our Emerald City, Toto".

Public opposition to

persuaded to start a curbside recycling program, which will hopefully become city-wide.

Next election, Seattle mayor Charles Royer may receive a serious political challenge from contractor and building renovator, Paul Schell. Schell has proposed a 5-year moratorium on downtown development and seems to have public support.



Construction in full swing, Autumn of 1987

Aaron Coffin

suffering and may fold, while large development firms haul in big contracts.

Seattle city administration is increasingly becoming associated with developer-oriented, rather than people-oriented, planning.

Other recent controversial projects include the State-financed Convention Center and the "Hey, what happened to the Monorail?" Westlake Mall. Both of these projects have required special bonds to accommodate their large cost over-runs, which has not helped their popularity.

Many Seattleites spoke out in

mismanagement and overdevelopment has become a political force in Seattle. In 1987, a party called "Vision Seattle" was formed around the issue of preserving the liveability of the city. Vision Seattle ran three candidates in the November, 1987 city council elections, receiving vote percentages in the 20% and 30% range. Those are pretty good results for a newly formed party in its first election.

Seattle's proposed mass garbage incinerator has received such stiff opposition that the city administration has actually been

The fate of the Monorail is indicative of the loss of aesthetic vision among city leaders. Built for the 1960 World's Fair, Seattle's elevated train has always been a symbol of an optimistic future. Instead of shortening the Monorail to make way for Westlake Mall, it might have been extended to the Kingdome, thus eliminating the need - if indeed one exists - for a bus tunnel.

This would have had far less environmental impact. And wouldn't you rather ride in an elevated train than an underground bus?

BLOCK...

both experiential and adventure education lend themselves to teaching about the natural environment, Huxley College offers a quarter of study called "The Spring Block".

For the past nine years, Spring Block has brought together approximately twenty students to spend an intense quarter of learning and experiencing together. The program's principal aim is to teach participants, through hands-on learning, how to become better facilitators of both experiential and adventure education. Both of these educational styles lend themselves to teaching about the environment by helping to develop an appreciation for the natural world.

This year's Block is in full swing, with many things already accomplished and more tasks yet to come. Our week of rock-climbing in Leavenworth helped cement the group into a supportive unit with which to attack the main project of the quarter: to plan and teach

Outdoor School for the sixth grade class from Granite Falls.

The Outdoor School curriculum consists of three days of field activities, during which various ecosystems - from marine to meadow - are investigated. Plans for standard camp activities, such as crafts, campfires and nature walks, also must be prepared. Afterwards,

The program's principle aim is to teach through hands-on learning.

two days of in-class teaching will allow for a review of what students - we and sixth graders alike - have learned.

Teaching Outdoor School is an opportunity for true learning. Curricula need to be planned, logistics organized, then the actual teaching must take place. In a recent review session with Granite Falls administrators, we all experienced the pressure of having our efforts judged according to real-life objectives. Rather than simply receiving a grade back from a professor, we were evaluated

according to what would and would not work for Outdoor School. The impact of the session was significantly more moving than a standard course grade.

While Spring Block focuses mainly upon off-campus activities, we do spend some time in class. Most days are scheduled around three hours of morning classes during which various ideas on educational theories, curriculum planning and environmental ethics are addressed. These morning sessions help provide the necessary academic information for a total learning experience and the tools for professional field work.

To culminate the quarter's experiences, we will head off for two weeks of hiking in the Pasayten Wilderness Area. This is a chance to further hone our wilderness skills, bring some closure to the quarter, and graduate into the world a new flock of environmental educators.

Hopefully, Spring Block will provide the skill and motivation educators need to help students of all ages develop a gentle balance between humanity and the natural world.

SWANS...

Because of the mild weather last fall, many farmers plowed and replanted their fields before the swans began arriving in late October. The replanting usually is done in spring, after the swans have returned to their breeding grounds on the Canadian tundra. The early replanting by area farmers has raised concerns among State wildlife agents and private sector biologists, that there may be insufficient corn and barley to feed the increasingly large flocks of swans wintering in local fields.

In the early 1930's, trumpeter swans were thought to be on the verge of extinction. The discovery of 3,000 previously uncounted trumpeters in Alaska in the '60's helped bring the population

to a respectable 11,000 swans. This winter's local population averaged 400 swans, up from 350 last winter.

One reason for this increase has been the abundance of food made available to the swans by cultivated fields. If the trend of limiting or taking away those food sources continues, the population may be expected to once again decrease.

The swans have recently shown a fondness for another human food - potatoes. Three winters ago, biologists discovered swans feeding on potatoes left in the fields by Skagit Valley farmers. Since that discovery, the number of trumpeters feeding on potatoes has increased from 1 to 7 percent. Banko believes this new feeding habit will result in healthier swans.

"The starch added to their diet

should enable more swans to survive the winter and the long flight back to their breeding grounds," he stated.

Trumpeters are the largest swans in the world, weighing up to 40 pounds, with a wingspan of up to 8 feet!

Skagit Valley's wintering trumpeters may be seen feeding in the lush farming areas of the Skagit flats. A fair number of swans also winter on the Nooksack delta.

When viewing the swans, experts advise doing so from a distance, using a good pair of binoculars or a spotting scope. Sneaking up to get a better look will cause them to fly off. Repeated "flushings", as wildlife agents call this activity, stresses the swans, causing them to stop feeding and creating nervous disorders.

The street is deserted tonight, and a dark silence hangs upon the city. A cold acidic breeze runs through my hair as I pick my way through a rubble of collapsed buildings. A tremor runs through me as I think of the Nazi street gang that "owns" this part of town.

Lighting up a cigarette, I rest momentarily, wiping away the film of soot that has collected on my forehead. Suddenly, there is a sound, horrible and unmistakeable ... sewer rats!

I jump up and flee into a maze of decrepit doorways. I hear behind me the snarling of the giant, radioactive beasts. Turning quickly, I manage to zap two of the monsters into oblivion with my short-range lazer pistol, but there are too many. I race down the alley, splashing through hot, glowing, orange puddles, but the rats are gaining....

Hollywood scenarios like to present a world in which, because of some ecological or nuclear disaster, we can return to our primitive roots. Equipped with modern technology, yet reacting to our instincts, we are ready to encounter a new, mutated planet. This world we must conquer, as our ancestors conquered theirs. Here we find the

excitement of which the mechanized 20th century has deprived us. This scenario subconsciously influences us into an acceptance of a destroyed natural landscape, and a denial of ecological balance.

The real problem is that ecology is boring. In a world of MTV and Datsun Z-80's, environmentalism just does not cut it when it comes to entertainment.

Environmentalists, like folk music and bicycling, and they are vegetarians. Vegetarians are boring. Animals are boring. Killing and eating animals is exciting. My father told me that when he was a kid on his father's farm, he chopped the head of a turkey, and then had to chase it a mile down the road. Running after headless turkeys is exciting.

Talking about the ozone layer is boring, but hair spray is exciting. Forest are boring; they are too quiet, and do not have enough parking. Shopping malls are exciting; they are loud, have plenty of parking, and are good places to buy hair spray. Passenger pigeons do not use hair spray. Passenger pigeons are extinct; that's *really* boring.

Learning about nature is

boring. Nuclear power is exciting. Frogs are boring, but 9-legged mutant frogs found near nuclear power plants are exciting.

Our society seems to have the collective vision of an undisciplined six-year old who will not listen to his mother:

"Timmy, how many times do I have to tell you, I want this room cleaned up or there won't be any T.V. in the 21st Century. You've had fun with your toys, but now there's toxic waste all over the bed. And look at this - you've knocked over the aquarim on your Sunday clothes, and all the fish are dying. And this smoke in here! I told you not to play with matches, you little deviant!"

If we wish to avoid being punished by our Mother Earth, we must take responsibility for our actions, and put aside our childish Hollywood value system. The movie fantasies show a few survivors slugging it out in a New World. How do you know that you would be one of the "lucky" ones?

There is hope for the world, though. Even environmentalists aren't as boring as George Bush.

continued from page 14



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What Tom and Saul like least about their work is the administration and paperwork. For this reason they will be hiring an intern this summer to help with these duties.

Saul and Tom appeared relaxed and easy-going when I interviewed them. They impressed me as perfectionists, committed to the best in field education. I think that running the Institute collectively is one of the main reasons class offerings are so diverse and

interesting.

Tom said, toward the end of our interview, that if there was one thing he would tell people, it would be to "Believe that you can do what you want, instead of getting frustrated that society doesn't have what you want."

The development of the North Cascades Institute is a shining example of that thought in motion.

If you are interested write:
North Cascades Institute
c/o North Cascades National Park
2105 Highway 20
Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

editorial

Cleaning Up Our Collective Mess

Do you walk to school or carry your lunch?

When faced with such a question, the standard reaction is to turn away in confusion. It is this response that local industries and pollution control agencies provoke when they pose the question: "Which is more important to the Puget Sound area, secondary sewage treatment or toxic waste site clean-up?"

It is not a matter of "either" or "or". Personally, I both walk to school *and* carry my lunch. I also believe that both toxic clean-up and secondary sewage treatment are top priorities for Puget Sound.

One problem - sewage - is generated by the public. The other - toxic waste - is produced by private industry. The fact that industry's mess is severe enough to evoke public concern, does not mean that the public is responsible for cleaning it up at the expense of other programs such as the implementation of secondary sewage treatment.

The argument has been presented that if taxpayers around Puget Sound desire both low unemployment statistics and an environment free of toxic waste, they must be willing to pay for both. If industries are required to foot the bill for toxic clean-up, they allegedly will be forced to protect their profit margins through lay-offs. Some may even be forced out of production all together. This argument also claims that secondary sewage treatment is not necessary, that funds allocated to this project are essentially being wasted and would be better implemented as

subsidies for polluters who claim they "cannot afford" to clean up their toxic waste sites. All of these assumptions are rooted in fallacy.

First of all, it is time that industry stop viewing pollution control as a burden above and beyond the assumed costs of production.

Let us hear no more of jobs versus the environment when the means by which to secure both are available.

Until the relatively recent development of the Clean Water and Superfund acts, toxic waste disposal was basically free of charge; U-haul and pick-a-dump policies prevailed. But sometime, someone must pay. Since industry has reaped the benefits in the past, the payment is due from the individual firms - and the consumers who support those firms - that have previously enjoyed lowered costs.

It is a political scare tactic for industry to threaten jobs at the first sign of decreased profit. There are other ways to recoup. For instance, the price of clean-up should be directly reflected in the price of the product. In this way, the financial burden is absorbed in part by the public, but limited to those who consume the products that generate the waste.

The only circumstance under which the allocation of public funds is justifiable, is that of cleaning up the back log of waste generated either under previous ownership of an existing firm, or by a firm that is

no longer in operation.

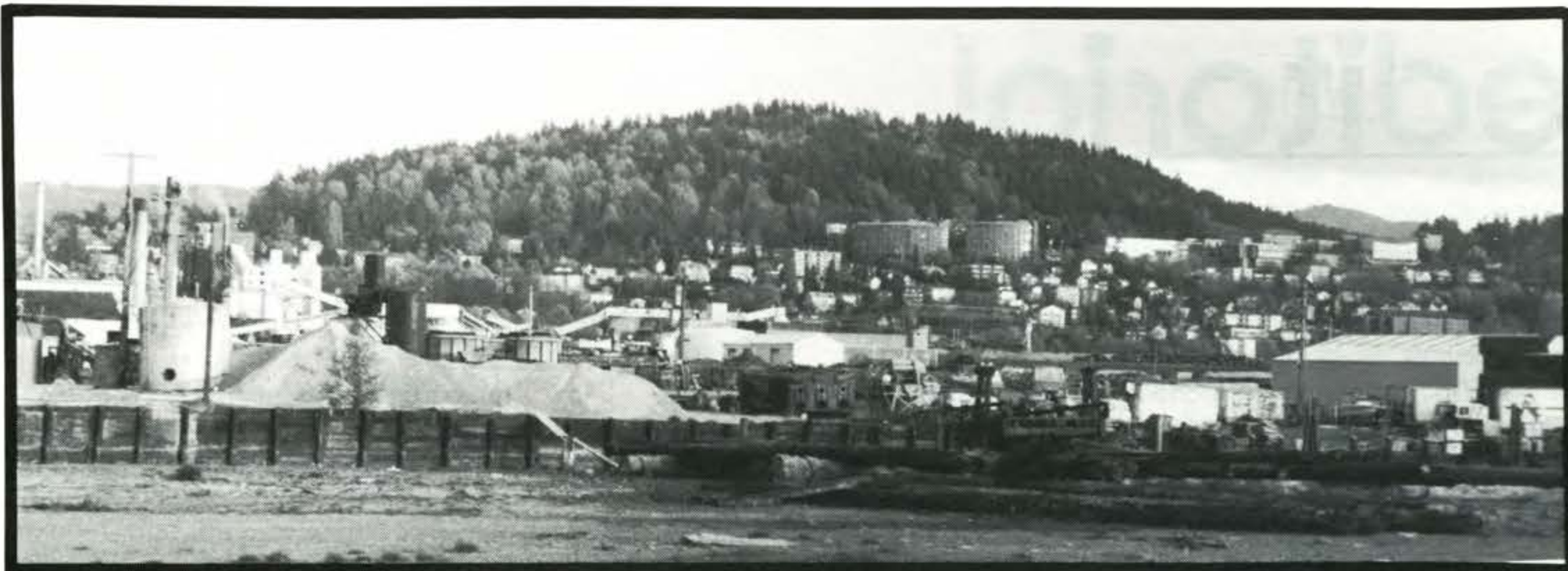
Let us hear no more of "jobs versus the environment" when the means by which to secure both are available.

Secondly, the need for secondary treatment of all sewage effluent into Puget Sound is a very valid concern. The high biological oxygen demand of raw sewage could eventually change the Sound's entire ecosystem. Recent studies may provide little proof of sewage-induced ecological upset. But what will be the impact in twenty years if the current projection of *doubled* population for the region occurs? The ongoing legal, social and political repercussions of the toxic waste generated over the last twenty years ought to serve as adequate warning: Plan ahead!

And finally, the funds exist to accomplish both goals. There is Superfund, most of which is garnered by taxes levied on the chemical industry. There is direct pricing control; for the first time in history, let consumers pay the true cost of the products they choose to purchase. And there are taxes. If existing allocations of federal, state and local taxes are not sufficient to cover the cost of secondary sewage treatment, then larger grants should be posted or a greater tax levied.

Both toxic waste site clean-up and secondary treatment of all sewage are issues of great concern, regardless of how they compare to each other in severity. We must accept the responsibility to pay now for the solutions to these problems; the longer we wait, the higher the price will be.

Heather Koon



Sehome Hill rises like a green island above Bellingham.

Gary Koch

Sehome Hill; Where Will it Go from Here?

by Cortlandt Fletcher

Like a green island, Sehome Hill rises above the artificial features that surround it. A refuge and lookout point for birds and humans alike, it adds greatly to Bellingham's unique character and aesthetic qualities.

I have walked the trails on Sehome Hill many times, in all seasons, and am glad it is classed as an "arboretum", preserving its natural state as a source of inspiration and learning. I often wonder at the marvelous healing process happening there, and see a great potential waiting to be realized.

Long ago, before humans set foot on Sehome, before it even had a name, this little hill beside the bay was home to an extraordinary number of plants and animals. Black bear, wolves, mountain lions, bobcat, elk and deer competed for life in this lush and diverse ecosystem.

Before the animals arrived, one glacial advance after another shrouded the hill and wore away the softer silt and bedrock. This created a thin loam soil that does not support the moisture needed by the cedar- and hemlock-dominated climax forest so typical of Western

Washington. Thus, the hill is a perfect site for a variety of native Northwest plants and animals rarely found in mature Northwest ecosystems.

Sometimes during lazy afternoons, I lay back and dream of the unique natural history of this hill. I try to envision my own role - and responsibility - for the future.

What is the purpose of an "arboretum?" Could it be any better? Does it matter?

Currently, there are no lesson plans designed around Sehome Hill, no interpretive trails, no educational curricula, and certainly no future environmental educators using the facility for training. The feasibility of the hill becoming a model arboretum is very high; yet today, educators would find a setting scarred with broken bottles, empty asphalt parking areas, eroding hillsides, and tire treads.

Action to make this arboretum fit for the purposes for which it was established is long overdue.

To catalyze such action, a group of Western students has organized to form "Friends of Sehome

Hill Arboretum" (FOSHA), a club dedicated to restoring the hill, and promoting its use as an educational facility.

Those involved with FOSHA believe that the greatest lesson of all is to be found through study of the natural history of this small earth island: logged, burned, ransacked and paved over, only to return to its natural state. They feel that native habitat and the reintroduction of native plant and animal life is essential not only to preserve our natural heritage, but to ensure our future survival. History reminds us how those civilizations that squandered or devastated their resources eventually collapsed.

The future of the arboretum is entirely up to individual and community participation. Only through direct action and stewardship can the hill's potential be realized. Love, respect, and admiration can truly be measured in giving back that which gave so much.

Sehome Hill is more than just somebody's backyard or a city park. With a little community participation, it is entirely possible that the hill will become what it was intended to be -- an outdoor laboratory and learning resource, a small message of hope, and a place in which to recreate our love of life and the living.

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little"

-Edmund Burke

