

State of the Neighborhood

The Highlands had an amazing 2008, and 2009 is shaping up to be a memorable year as well.

We can be very proud of what we accomplished in 2008. Approximately 200 people donated over 950 volunteer hours to a wide range projects that will benefit our neighborhood and our city.

In partnership with the Green Kirkland Program, we hosted a hugely successful "Earth Day with Goats" event in April - 150 people and 60 goats cleared half an acre of blackberries in Cotton Hill Park.

We built a 500 foot long raised gravel trail in Cotton Hill Park and celebrated with a Grand Opening.

We held two well-attended community social events: an egg hunt in the spring and a picnic in the fall.

We continued to maintain Cedar View Park, our entrance sign landscaping, and the trees we've planted.

We organized a "Celebrate Sidewalks" walking event to celebrate completion of the 112th Avenue Northeast walkway, which was paid for with our 2005 Neighborhood Connections program money.

We worked closely with students from the UW-REN program, who are restoring a 4000 square foot section of Cotton Hill Park.

We collected 2788 pounds of food for Hopelink.

We voted to use some of our 2008



neighborhood connections money to widen and asphalt the pedestrian walking path along the east side of 116th Ave. N.E. between Northeast 88th

and Northeast 94th streets.

We began landscaping the 112th Ave. N.E. and N.E. 87th St. entrance to our neighborhood, next to the railroad tracks. Volunteers weeded a 2000 square foot area, spread and rototilled in 19 yards of compost, and spread wood chip mulch.

So what are the plans for 2009? The year has already started off with a bang. Our Martin Luther King Day of Service at Cotton Hill Park was a huge success - 63 people donated almost 200 hours removing blackberry, ivy, and holly, and spreading many yards of wood chip mulch. If you haven't been to the park in a while, you will hardly recognize parts of it.

On March 7, join us for the next restoration event. We'll be planting native plants, removing more invasives, and mulching. We're planning additional restoration events for the fall.

Another big project in 2009 will be to rebuild the stairs that start at 116th Ave. N.E. and N.E. 107th St. and go down to the railroad tracks. The stairs

are a valuable link in Kirkland's growing urban trail network, but they are badly in need of repair. We hope to do the stair construction work in late summer or fall.

On Saturday, April 11 we'll host a spring egg hunt. This fun event is a wonderful opportunity to meet new neighbors, renew old acquaintances, and see how the kids have grown.

On Sunday, Sept. 13 we'll host a neighborhood picnic, with food, games, and lots of socializing.

In the spring we'll hold a planting work party to complete the 112th landscaping.

We'll also refurbish our three kiosks with new paint and corkboards.

To make sure you hear about all of these events, sign up for the Highlands e-mail list! Go to our Web site at www.KirklandHighlands.org. The site also has information about upcoming neighborhood events, photos of previous events, and numerous useful links. If you're on the email list, but haven't been receiving the e-mails, check our Web site for instructions on how to solve the problem.

Thank you to the city of Kirkland for continuing to fund the Neighborhood Matching Grant program despite the budget shortfalls. The grants are a wise use of tax dollars. They save money, build community, and increase civic involvement. The Highlands neighborhood intends to make wise use of the money we receive. *Karen Story is a Kirkland resident in the Highlands neighborhood.*