

NOTES ON ROUTE

We are so lucky that we are able to use the same route for the 2009 walk as we did in 2008!!! We had a lot of positive feedback regarding last year's route. We hope you enjoy the beautiful scenery and make sure you take the time to look around. We are so fortunate to have you walking with us this year!

See you soon,

Maureen and Lester

On day 1 we will visit the Spring Canyon Community Park. This is a large park that includes baseball fields, picnic shelters, and Inspiration Playground (IP). IP is the first fully accessible playground in Colorado and is modeled after Shane's Inspiration in Los Angeles. It is an incredibly, beautiful project accomplished by a very special group of people. You can view this on YouTube by typing in inspiration playground on your search engine. Prepare to have goose bumps. In addition we will visit for the fourth year, The Gardens on Spring Creek. This is an 18 acre park committed to educational, community and environmental causes and includes among other things, a children's garden and community gardening plots. Enjoy the unique "art/garden" works at this park!

Day 2 will include The Environmental Learning Center (ELC) and the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program (RMRP). The 200 acre ELC natural area has largely been reclaimed from gravel mining. Consisting of four major ecological habitats -- riparian, grasslands, wetlands, and cottonwood forest--the ELC supports a rich mixture of plant and animal life. The Cache la Poudre River runs through the site and influences each habitat area. ELC's mission is to connect people with nature by facilitating educational, inclusive and safe experiences in the natural environment and to advance the field of environmental education through sound research and practice. Look for wildlife and cooler temperatures. The Rocky Mountain Raptor Program (RMRP) exists to help people understand their important role in protecting and preserving wildlife and wild places. RMRP is also fervently dedicated to rescuing and rehabilitating injured birds of prey, including Eagles, Owls, Hawks and Falcons. RMRP has admitted more than 3,500 raptors for treatment since the program started as a student club in 1979. More than 70% of treatable raptors are released. Take an extra few minutes to walk to the cages and view the birds of prey! Also check out the "graveyard" to see how long it takes common object to degrade...if ever. The Mason Street trail is one of the newest in Ft. Collins. This trail will connect the Spring Creek and Fossil Creek Trails. Between Drake and Horsetooth, look for foxes. There is a den on the southwest side of the trail between Dellenbach and Horsetooth. Look for a large turtle and hawks on the trail south of Harmony. A new addition to many of the trails **are** beautiful tiles lining sign posts.

Day 3 will include the Annual Flower Trial Gardens at Colorado State University, CSU campus and Old Town Fort Collins. The purpose of the trial program conducted at the Annual Flower Trial Garden is to evaluate the performance of different annual plant

cultivars under our unique Rocky Mountain environmental conditions. Our growing conditions are characterized by high altitude, intense solar radiation, drying winds, severe hailstorms, large fluctuations between day and night temperatures and a season-long need for irrigation. Each year, our annual trial consists of over 1,000 different cultivars of annual bedding plants. Varieties are grouped by genus, arranged by color and grown in rows, side-by-side, so as to facilitate the comparison of similar varieties.

The outdoor display and test areas at the Annual Flower Trial Garden were established to allow students, researchers, industry representatives, homeowners and extension personnel to learn, teach and evaluate through horticultural research and demonstration projects conducted in the unique environmental conditions of the Rocky Mountain/High Plains region. This is a GREAT photo-op location! Colorado State University (CSU) has beautiful gardens, architecture, lagoon and shady spots. Enjoy our beautiful campus! The "oval" at CSU is one of the signature locations on campus and a location for weddings, community events, Frisbee games and general relaxation. Old Town Ft. Collins has beautiful tree lined streets, interesting and varied architecture and additional shade! Watch for the changes between old and new architecture. Enjoy the routes and the company and friends you will meet along the way and most of all THANK-YOU for helping us in the fight against Multiple Sclerosis and supporting those living with MS.