TRAIL

Continued from Page B1

The trail in places more resembled a gap between hedgerows — the sort of place where G.I.'s would creep through in June 1944, M1s at ready, listening for the clattering of German tanks.

Then we saw Victoria herself, chopping away at what seemed a Sisyphean

We stopped for a few understand the actual scale a brief glance at the dozens of freshly cut limbs scattered beside the trail as we hiked, that prior to the

pruning, walking this way would have been an exer-

exercise.

And strenuous exercise, given the grade of the Cunningham Cove trail, which varies from moderately steep to an incline that might give you reason to wonder whether a person designed the route or whether it just follows the paths made by elk and other animals that are much more agile than we are.

Besides battling snowbrush, Victoria had sawed through more than 40 trees that had tumbled across the trail.

This, too, is an inevitable effect following a major fire. The dead trees, deprived of their former roothold, are easy prey for winter winds.

cleared about a mile and a half of the trail.

boundary was blatant we went rather suddenly from an obvious path to a route much less distinct due to the fallen trees and encroaching vegetation (lodgepoles, mainly; fortunately the snowbrush is mainly confined to the lower sections of the trail).

We had to pause a few times to find the way. Some previous hiker or trail worker built several rock cairns, but there aren't enough to serve as guides in places where the tread becomes all but indistinguishable.

Another useful tactic is to stop and look for logs that have been sawed through. These are usually reliable evidence that the trail is near.

We kept at it, though, and eventually made it to the Elkhorn Crest Trail. It was worth the toil to hike a hundred feet or so north on the Crest Trail for the view down to Crawfish Meadow

with its inimitable shade of sylvan green. The breeze was fresh and the air pleasantly cool in the shade of

We had another brief conversation with Victoria on the way down, where she was having a go at the juvenile lodgepoles that

We hadn't hiked Cunningham Cove since the early autumn of 2012, when Max, just a toddler, made the trip riding on my shoulders in a backpack carrier.

I was not a little dismayed by how terribly the trail had deteriorated in a little less than nine years. Had the route been then as it is now we certainly wouldn't have made it to

ously gratified that something's being done to

Victoria is on the job, resurrecting, as it were, a public path that might well have been lost to the ravages of wildfire and the unrelenting alpine climate.

She has quite a lot yet

to do. Based on what we saw on June 26, I wouldn't recommend the Cunningham Cove trail for hikers who

aren't accustomed to difficult terrain and confident in their route-finding abilities.

But the improvements Victoria has made are noteworthy.

Updates about her progress, and the Trailhead Stewardship Project, are available online at www. thetrailheadbakercity.com.



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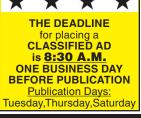
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YOUR BIRTHDAY by Stella Wilder

minutes to chat, and to thank her for making the hike possible. I didn't of the endeavor until a few days later, when I saw a photo of the trail before Victoria started beating back the snowbrush. But even without photographic proof it was obvious, from

cise in frustration. But now it was just

Victoria told us she had

And indeed the

the whitebark pines.

crowd the trail in places. It was an illuminating experience.

the end.

But I was simultaneimprove the situation, that

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HOROSCOPES

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) -- You may support. Indeed, you often get so charged up about an idea, movement or cause that you find that not everyone is willing to follow you attract a large and appreciative audience quickly and easily inspire those around you to at this time -- and this tells you something no today, but it's not those already on your side take action as well, so that you never have to one has been able to say directly. engage in any kind of fight on your own. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) --SUNDAY, IULY 4 What begins in the shadows today is likely to hear by chance today is sure to affect how you CANCER (June 21-July 22) -- You may burst into the light unannounced at an inop-

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AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) -- A past

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) -- You're not

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) -- You must episode is worth some study today as you try

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