

yukHistory for Chapter 9, Part II

By Jackie Deal

There are stories that need to be told. Stories about the people, who with the proverbial sweat, blood and tears, and with faith and trust, built a dream. The dream we live in today.

It is interesting that nearby Oakland had been considered for the park. Oakland, however, wasn't sure they wanted the park: Betty Hyndman remembers Oakland feared "those old men might rape our young girls". In Oakland's defense it was in 1981 that the Rajneeshees were deported after committing criminal offences in Eastern Oregon. Oakland (and also Sutherlin) feared that the Escapees might be another dangerous sect.

Chapter 9 Members surveyed (by Doris Field) wanted "near a small town" with city sewer, 50 amp, phones and cable TV, storage sheds, and laundry. In the May-June 1988 newsletter Harry Lewis, Secretary, reports: "The place is SUTHERLIN. 90 acres. Land costs work out to \$544 per lot for 150 lots. A great price in a town that wants us!" Can't you see the excitement in the capital letters and the exclamation point?

March 1988, dispatch from the committee said: "The Land Search Committee found a wonderful piece of property for our park "for a total of \$90,031.

Use your imagination and let's go back to 1988. You're at a Chapter 9 SKP rally in Cottage Grove, Oregon when you hear the exciting news: "There's a spot in Sutherlin. Big! Just right! We can get it for our park."

Eagerly you join a caravan heading South some 40 miles to the tiny town of Sutherlin. Not many businesses. Lots of vacancies on the dreary main street. A town that desperately needs something to invigorate it. Population about 4000. Of course it's raining; after all, this is Oregon.

Turn off Center street onto South State Street (a rather pretentious name for an unpaved road, don't you think?)

Your tires crunch on the gravel and the windshield wipers slap back and forth. The few houses are small and dreary. Meadows Park is just that, a meadow.

You wind on up the hill (the current drive into Timber Valley does not exist). On up the hill and around the curve to where the street now ends by Site #1.

Jane Lee remembers, "It was a muddy mess. Bottles and junk. The road was a cow trail. There was no water or sewer to the area."

With about 40 others, you peer thru the wetness and you see---"a muddy mess". A meadowed hillside, scrubby brush, a few straggly trees, cans, bottles, the left-behinds of a lover's lane. And everywhere: mud. There are hidden springs adding to the rain sluicing down the hill. There are also -- wild roses.

On Oct. 15, 1988: "The 90.19 acres cost \$80,000" ... plus additional costs "for a total of \$90,031."

Believe it or not: \$90,000 instead of \$300,000 (the original cost the acreage sold for) and 90 acres instead of 20 (in Bandon)! How lucky we are in our choice of forefathers and foremothers!