

**CINDY LESTER AND CHRISTINA RUDE | KITSAP ADVENTURES**

## Hiking Surprise in Port Gamble

Last month Christina and I had the privilege of doing a book signing together with Seabury Blair Jr. Of course I felt compelled to buy his latest book, "The Creaky Knees Guide" for hiking in Washington.

I was hoping to find a few treasures in there somewhat near Kitsap County, and to my delight there were THREE from our area and one that I had never heard of. Dave and I instantly packed up the kids and decided to go on a hike to the Port Gamble trails. It was such a treat to find this jewel tucked away in this little corner of Kitsap.

Driving there took a few U-turns but we eventually got straightened out and found the trailhead.

The trailhead we were looking for is off to the south just as you enter town (there are also two others according to the map on the other side of town). Pope Resources has a downloadable hiking map that's available online and quite handy for this excursion.

One of the really nice aspects of this trail are the interpretive signs staggered throughout pointing to various sights of interest such as the bear-feeding station (for when the summer time berries are not in supply ... not so sure if I actually liked knowing about this) and tree notches made from the springboards used by loggers long ago.

We enjoyed the deep

woods on this very hot day and all the beauty it afforded us. The children enjoyed eating their way through miles of salmonberries. There are over 4,300 acres of land to discover here. It

is hoped that eventually it will be the backbone of the North Kitsap String of Pearls (a dream to connect several of our local towns via a non-motorized trail system). We strolled through forests of evergreens, alders and maples where it eventually breaks to a clearing with views of Whidbey Island and Puget Sound all around you.

This trail can really be as long or as short as you desire (especially if you have the map with you) capping at close to 5 miles. On our day the kids were clearly eager for a shorter version with the promise of ice cream at the end. I am ever grateful for the Port Gamble General Store and their frozen concoctions!

**Where:** Port Gamble

**When:** Trails are open year-round, day use only; no overnight camping.

**Cost:** Free

**More Information:** Trail map is downloadable at [www.portgamble.com](http://www.portgamble.com). This is a strictly non-motorized trail, but is accessible to biking and horses as well as hikers.

**Next Week:** Anna Smith Children's Garden

*Cindy Lester and Christina Rude are co-authors of the third edition of "Great Adventures for Kitsap Peninsula." E-mail your comments or ideas to: [kitsapadventures@yahoo.com](mailto:kitsapadventures@yahoo.com).*