BY DONNA RHODES
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A team of students, teachers and chaperones from Belmont High School’s science program spent their April vacation learning about the natural world at both Mount St. Helens (shown here in a group photo) and Olympic National Park’s “Natureritage” program in Washington State.

The program began in 1973 as the Yosemite Institute and since that time has expanded its outreach. Today is encompassed more than 700 schools and 30,000 students and teachers every year. Bringing life changing experiences to more than one million students since its start, NatureBridge connects youth to the natural beauty of national parks such as Olympic, Yosemite, Golden Gate, Santa Monica Mountains, Channel Islands, and Prince William Forest.

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The volcano is still somewhat active today, registering daily seismic activity as it builds a slight dome of lava or spews some ash, but so far it is nothing that is readily evident in the area.

Despite nearly four decades of clean up of many remnants remain on the rugged slopes though, and the students were awed by the effects they could observe from an actual volcanic eruption that took place as recently as 1980.

“Everyone should take a little time to come out and see what’s old, restored and new here in the center of our town,” said Elison Gibbett, Library Director. The Library, open for regular hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. displays exhibits, while near the Bandstand, Tiga River Pavilion and a newly sited covered bridge spanning the Tiga River, will have volunteeers on hand. The Corner Meeting House will serve as both a refreshment and learning-center. Featuring displays at the Belmont Historical Society, Blinwa Trail Friends of the Library, Friends of the Bandstand and Save the Gale School Committee, the Corner Meeting House will serve as both a refreshment and learning-center.

They were huge,” she said. “The forest were knocked down from the blast. The views of Mount St. Helens still remained on the rugged slopes though, and the students were awed by the effects they could observe from an actual volcanic eruption that took place as recently as 1980.

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