



Friends of the Forest

Dedicated to the preservation of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands through education, outreach & stewardship

Volume 26 • Issue 4 • Fall 2012



You are cordially invited to The Friends of the Forest Benefit Party



Saturday, October 20th from 5:30 pm to 11:00 pm at The Port Warehouse



Dedy Ward, *Mt. Erie*, 14 x 12", oil on board

Fall is a special time of year for Friends of the Forest. Not only is it an enjoyable season to be in the woods but it's a nice time to gather with friends and celebrate our unique natural treasure – *The Anacortes Community Forest Lands*. Please join us for a fun filled evening; starting with music by Fidalgo Swing and great food prepared by Gere-a-Deli, a silent auction and short live auction followed by dancing to the music of Spoonshine Duo.

The event often sells out so don't be left out of the party this year! Individual tickets are \$50.00 (with \$25.00 being tax deductible) or by the table: \$400.00 for a table of eight, \$500.00 for a table of ten. Purchase tickets at Watermark Book Company in Anacortes or through the Friends of the Forest Office by calling 293.3725 or online at: www.friendsoftheacfl.org.

Joel Brock is our featured artist for this year's event. His beautiful 23" x 30" pastel, acrylic and charcoal painting will be the highlight of the live auction. His painting titled, "*Lisa's Forest*" is inspired by time spent with a friend in our woods. Joel is very supportive of the Friends of the Forest and we are honored by his beautiful donation to us.

Other artists who have generously donated original work include: Dedy Ward, Jennifer Bowman, Leo Osborne, Cynthia Richardson, and others. Many local individuals and businesses have donated a wide assortment of wonderful items for the silent and live auctions. You can also look forward to kayak trips, sailing adventures, the popular Sushi dinner, weekend stays in a Winthrop cabin or Port Townsend castle and much more. Please go to our website for a list of auction items.

This event provides the primary funding for our entire Forest Education and Stewardship program. For over 25 years, the Friends of the Forest have provided multi-layered forest education programs that strive to meet the needs of all Fidalgo Island residents. In partnership with the City and School District, our Forest Education Programs work to connect citizens of all ages with their community forest and deepen their understanding of the watershed flowing into the sea around us. Over one thousand local citizens of all ages participate in our programs each year!

Mark your calendar for October 20th and plan to have a fun evening with forest friends, great food, varied libation and wonderful entertainment. **It's the best party of the year!**



Jennifer Bowman, *Meandering Stream & Tulips*, 24" x 30" acrylic on canvas.

Lakeside Industries Expansion?

Lakeside Industries is preparing to expand west onto private property from current mining operations on leased ACFL property. Friends of the ACFL commented on the application for conversion of the private property from timber production to mining. Our comments were brief, simply supporting a thorough environmental review of any proposal. A Determination of Non-Significance was then issued by the county on the conversion of the property. If this potential project moves forward, there will be more opportunity for public comment and environmental review. Please contact the county if you wish to be informed during the process.



Oyster mushrooms love alder trees.

In Memory



George J. Mehler 1929-2012

George was a long term member of Friends of the Forest, an active volunteer for ACFL work parties and a very involved community member.

He was a happy hiker in our woods and will be deeply missed.

FOREST ADVISORY BOARD

The City Forest Advisory Board meets every first Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at Fidalgo Center and is open to the public.

FOREST BOARD MEMBERS

Sandra Starbuck	901-9179
Brian Wetcher	293-7624
Marty Laumbattus	293-7940
Rick Boge	299-2692
Marcia Hunt	293-0983

PARKS & FOREST LANDS

MANAGER

Jonn Lunsford 299-1953

CITY OF ANACORTES ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor, 4-year term, at large, salaried - 299-1950
Council Members (7) 4-year terms - 3 from Wards, 4 at Large - 293-1900

NAME	E-MAIL	PHONE	TERMS ENDS
Mayor Dean Maxwell	coa.mayor@cityofanacortes.org	299-1950	12/31/13
W1 Ryan Walters	www.ryanwalters.org	610-7770	12/31/15
W2 Brad Adams	brada@cityofanacortes.org	293-3056	12/31/15
W3 Eric Johnson	www.anacorteseric.org	840-5415	12/31/15
P4 Brian E. Geer	briang@cityofanacortes.org	293-4791	12/31/13
P5 Cynthia Richardson	cynthiar@cityofanacortes.org	299-9081	12/31/13
P6 Bill Turner	billt@cityofanacortes.org	293-9658	12/31/13
P7 Erica Pickett	ericap@cityofanacortes.org	293-6264	12/31/13

Meetings are 1st and 3rd Mondays, 7:00pm in Council Chambers.
Study Sessions are 2nd and 4th Mondays, 7:00pm in Council Chambers.

FRIENDS OF THE FOREST

OFFICERS

President	Andy Stewart	299-9406
Vice President	Monica Ochs	293-6003
Secretary	Jean Andrich	293-0124
Treasurer	Karen Haynes	708-3910

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH DIRECTOR

Denise Crowe 293-3725

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

Jean Andrich 293-3725

WEBSITE ADDRESS

www.friendsoftheacfl.org

BOARD MEMBERS

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Kara Fox	420-7372	Jan 2013	kararfox@gmail.com
Scott Gudmundsen	293-1550	Jan 2013	robertgudmundsen@shell.com

Friends of the Forest Board Meetings are at 7pm the second Wednesday of each month. We meet in room #31 on the 3rd floor in the Keystone Building, 619 Commercial Ave., Anacortes. Meetings are open to the public. Please come and get involved.



Crowe's Nest

Greetings Friends!

Autumn has arrived on a long stretch of sunshine, and our woods are showing the signs. Leaves are turning and falling early. Little plants on the forest floor have dried and gone into hiding. Cedar trees have entered their annual shedding phase, producing numerous bright orange branches before they drop. Our forest has seen abundant human activity this summer, the shores of Whistle and Little Cranberry attest to the ever increasing popularity of local lake swimming. Trails are wide and dusty. Our beloved Heart Lake is suffering from an out of balance algal load, more evident this year than ever. Not only was the hybrid milfoil and associated slimy green algae thicker than ever, late summer brought a toxic algae bloom. The health department closed the lake to recreation and our city staff worked to get the word out that the lake was unsafe for pets as well. Heart Lake is not alone. Other lakes in the region and the nation have experienced toxic blue green algae blooms this year, a testament to the extended sunshine and higher than normal temperatures. In the context of the rest of the nation, we have had it easy. Soon the rain and wind will come, bringing a healing and restorative season. Though we can't help but feel that each year we need fall and winter to do a little more.

Our Growing Wild program has begun with 3rd grade students in the district. The first classes and field trips have been exciting as the kids meet their native plants in class, and then find them in the forest. Their studies continue in the spring with more classes and field trips, providing a multi season awareness of our local forest ecology. This spring saw the first 7th grade class that had participated in Growing Wild as third grade students. Their memories of their own plants and each other's from four years prior were nothing short of amazing! As we proceeded in our watershed studies it was evident that they had a much deeper understanding of the diversity of local plant species and habitats and the importance of that for local native animals. It is gratifying to see the combination of the two programs is providing a very important foundation of local nature literacy for our children. Once sparked, their love for the forest inspires a lifelong learning relationship for them and they become the best teachers for each other and their families.

Preparations for our fall benefit event are underway. I am so deeply thankful for all the wonderful people that give time, energy, resources, and special talent to making the evening a success. The party is an important time of coming together in our forest community, a time of celebration and support for the coming year. We hope you can come!

I am also excited that board member Bill Dietrich and I will be teaching a Senior College course on the heart of our island in November. Community hikes have been very well attended this year. Each hike in the forest brings delightful surprise. Be sure to check your calendar and come along when you can.

See you in the woods,

Denise Crowe



A rare encounter with this mother douglas squirrel and her five young held a recent hiking group rapt. We stayed as long as we could, watching their tender ways. Photo by Cynthia Richardson.

In the Woods with Ranger Dave

Welcome to the ACFL! by Ranger Dave Oicles

2012 has been an interesting year in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. The wet and cooler than normal temperatures of the spring and summer months kept the ACFL crew very busy with trail pruning. Some trails needed to be pruned back 3 times during the summer months when normally only one time is enough to last the whole year. My hat goes off to ACFL Summer Crew members Diana Burr and Marcus Hanson for all their hard work and dedication to keep the trails open and safe. They took the extra work load in stride and helped on other trails in the Park system as well to battle the extra growth of plants. Seasonal creeks continued to flow into August, and wetlands stayed charged and full of water well into summer months. The extra growing season also created a massive crop of huckleberries along the trails. And if you were swimming in the ACFL lakes this year you probably noticed the increase in aquatic plant life. So with the rest of the country having record-breaking heat waves throughout the summer, our cooler and wetter weather conditions have made changes to our local environment. I'm not sure what to make of all this. Seeing mud on the trails in August instead of dust seemed a bit odd, but we still had plenty of folks out on the trails and lakes enjoying the wonderful natural resource we call the ACFL.

2012 also showed an increase in first-time visitors to the ACFL. A walk through any trailhead parking area during the summer months showed vehicle license plates from coast to coast and many

this year from our neighbors to the north, Canada. ACFL Staff fielded many questions on where to buy maps, best hiking trails, how long does it take to "get to the top" of Mt Erie, and so on. The increase in new visitors also gave us opportunities to reevaluate the information we post in the trailhead kiosks and managing unconventional trail use and activities in the City Forest Lands.

With the longer season of wet and cooler weather, some of the trails have shown an increase in erosion and degradation of vegetation along the edge of the trails due to trail users avoiding the mud and walking or riding on the edge, increasing the width of the trail which can lead to more erosion. Other areas have developed "spur" trails where users are short cutting the existing trail. It seemed that rainy days were plentiful this year, but many trail users continued to enjoy the trails on those days not realizing the extra impact it creates for trail erosion and trail maintenance. Rain is a natural process in the Pacific Northwest and it the reason we live in the green but there are times it may be best to give the trails a break during certain inclement weather days especially if you are riding a mountain bike, horse, or motorcycle.

During the fall, winter, and spring we put together "Work Parties" for volunteers to give back to the ACFL and help in ACFL projects, trail repairs, and removing non-native invasive plants. Below is a list of upcoming Work Parties. I hope to see you there, and as always, we'll supply the tools. Please dress warm and wear boots and gloves. Our work parties generally last 2 hours. We may cancel due to severe winds, rain, or snowfall.

WORK PARTIES

November 3rd at 9am, TRASH PICKUP: Last year volunteers found 2 \$100 dollar bills while cleaning up Heart Lake Road! What will we find this year? Let's meet at trailhead 215 on Heart Lake Road.

December 8th at 9am, TRAIL REPAIR: A stretch of trail 212 is heavily eroded and needs attention to get it back into tip top shape. Let's meet at trailhead 212 on Heart Lake Road.

For an updated list of upcoming work parties in the ACFL, please visit the City of Anacortes website at <http://www.cityofanacortes.org/> and search the Parks and Recreation page. Our past work parties have included projects to repair trails, build trail bridges, remove non-native invasive plant species, prune fire roads, plant trees, and clean up trash. If you have any questions please call Ranger Dave at 661-3554.

Fall Calendar 2012



Get to know your community forestlands! It's time to join a guided hike and begin to learn more about the fascinating wild heart of our island.

Please Note: *These hikes focus on wildlife and human experience. Please leave your dogs at home.*

ALL AGES HIKES

Open to children accompanied by an adult, individuals, and small groups. Ideal for families, friends, and anyone ready to explore and enjoy our community forest lands with the safety and knowledge of a naturalist guide.

Sugarloaf Mountain

Saturday, October 6th
10:00 am until noon

Experience the golden glow of Sugarloaf Mountain in the fall. We will hike from the dark woods at the base to the stunning summit view, enjoying every stretch in between. Meet at the trailhead on Ray Auld Drive at the bottom of Mount Erie just off Heart Lake Road.

Bat Cave

Saturday, October 27th
10:00 am until about noon

Come to the woods for a natural spook time that will help transition us all to the nocturnal season. Our annual bat cave exploration is fun for everyone. Costumes and flashlights are welcome. Meet at the Little Cranberry Lake parking lot on the north end of the lake.

Heart Lake Traverse

Saturday, November 10th
10:00 am until a little after noon

This is a beautiful area to get to know. We will circumnavigate the lake and become familiar with the many route options available to you when you explore on your own. Home to an exciting array of wildlife and habitats, this is truly the heart of our island. Meet at the Heart Lake parking lot.

Whistle Lake

Saturday, December 1st
10:00 am until noon

As glorious in late fall as in the heat of summer, this place is a treasure to know deeply. Dress for the weather and join this hearty hike. Meet at the Whistle Lake parking lot at the end of Whistle Lake Road.

SENIOR/ADULT HIKES

For any adult with a desire to learn more about our community forest lands through an easy hike in fine company, with a naturalist guide.

Heart Lake Old Growth

Friday, October 12th
10:00 am until noon

We have the best remaining stand of Puget Sound lowland old growth forest right here on Fidalgo Island in the heart of our community forest. Come along and experience the big old trees. Meet at the base of Mount Erie on Ray Auld Drive.

Little Beaver Pond Loop

Friday, November 9th
10:00 am until noon

Winter waterfowl have arrived in our forest ponds and lakes, ready for a safe place to rest and feed. We'll venture deeper into the woods to Little Beaver Pond, hopeful for the flash of a bufflehead or dive of merganser. Meet at the end of 29th St., west off of D Avenue.

Whistle Lake

Friday, December 7th
10:00 am until noon

The hush of Whistle near winter solstice couldn't be farther from the madding crowd of summer. Enjoy our deep water jewel of the forest during the season of recharge, and feel the stored sunlight energy emanating from the green. Meet at the Whistle Lake parking lot at the end of Whistle Lake Road.

FALL ADULT FITNESS HIKE:

Friday, October 5th 1 pm until 4 pm

Join Lin, Monica and Jean for another of our popular fitness hikes! Plan to cover around 9 miles as we hike in the Whistle and Heart Lake corridors. We'll get a grand view of Mt. Erie, Lake Erie, and Puget Sound before we visit a lovely rock wall and skirt Mt. Erie on our way back. Take Friday afternoon off, bring water and a snack and join us as we explore this beautiful part of the ACFL. Meet at the Whistle Lake parking lot.



An Idiot in the Forest.....

by Scott Gudmundsen

I've been out in the forest looking at tree bark lately. My life is so full and interesting. Tree bark is part of what gives a tree its character - we have several characters in our forest. Take a close look at the Western Red Cedar. It has long sinewy lines of reddish bark with tinges of green that give the tree a very sexy and sultry quality. A Western Red Cedar is a very classy tree because of its bark. When compared side by side to the Douglas Fir with its thick, gnarly, "don't mess with me" bark, there is quite a contrast. If the forest were to have a bully, it would be the Douglas Fir. If a Douglas Fir and a Western Red Cedar were to get married, I wonder what their children would look like. I'm sure that the offspring would be good at football **and** shopping.



The other common tree in our forest is Western Hemlock. It has "normal" bark. Nice, but nothing in particular that stands out. The most interesting thing about a Western Hemlock is the top of the tree. The top branch leans like the Tower of Pisa. That is the easiest way to identify a Western Hemlock - the leaning top. Take a look at that tilt in this picture - very strange.

I participated on one of the adult/senior hikes sponsored by Friends of the Forest conducted by Denise Crowe. This is how I learned about trees. I can't go on too many of these hikes because Denise shares a wealth of knowledge and I'll have to change the title of these articles.

The group of about 12 hiked the western side of Whistle Lake. We learned about a variety of plants and animal life and Denise showed us which berries we could eat. We got to the high cliffs where young people go to dive and watched 4 young



men diving. You have to pay for that in Acapulco. So I offered Denise \$50 to jump off the cliff into the water. She refused.....

We also learned about slugs during the hike. Previous to this hike, slugs seemed like such boring, slow creatures to me. Now, I have a whole new appreciation for them because Denise described all of the valuable forest services that slugs perform. At least now I know what to get Denise for Christmas; she will get a bumper sticker for her car that says: **I Brake for Slugs.**



Speaking of slugs, it was party time for them as July and August were quite prolific months for mushrooms and they love mushrooms. This large mushroom growing in the Heart Lake Forest made a hearty lunch for a big black slug.

This quarter's featured mushroom is very beautiful and rare. The specimen shown here was growing on trail 108 near Cranberry Lake. It looks like a big seashell with an unusual bright orange color that is quite a contrast to the surrounding green of the forest. These are called Chicken Mushrooms, or



officially *Laetiporus Sulphureus*, and they are very tasty according to my mushroom book. I'll let you guess what they taste like. Personally, I like to leave the mushrooms alone because they add so much to our forest plus I have a healthy fear of 'death by mushroom'.

Happy trails in the forest!

Editor's note: Denise says- I hate to break it to Scott, but he found two leaning Douglas Firs for his Western Hemlock picture. I look forward to seeing him in the forest again!



Thanks to this year's Friends of the Forest Benefit Event Sponsors!



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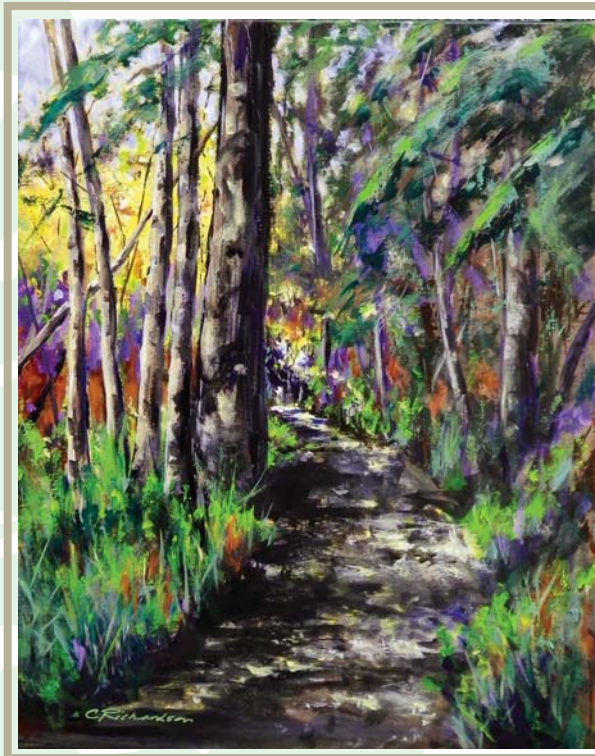
Thanks for Contributions from:

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Strandberg Construction

Watermark Book Company



Cynthia Richardson, **Forest Path**, 16 x 20 framed acrylic painting

Friends of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands

MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Friends of the Forest is a nonprofit, citizens organization dedicated to the preservation of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands through education, outreach and stewardship. *Friends of the Forest is a not for profit 501 c3 organization. Tax ID # 501c3 91-1430220*

PLEASE JOIN US! Membership and contributions are tax-deductible.

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

☐ Membership Renewal

☐ New Member

We offer many levels of annual membership dues. Please choose your level of support for this vital mission in our community.

Annual dues: ☐ Individual \$25 ☐ Family \$40 ☐ Partner \$50 ☐ Supporter \$100
☐ Sponsor \$250 ☐ Benefactor \$500 ☐ Steward \$1000 ☐ Major Donor \$5000 or more
Other _____

Areas of Interest _____ Topics for general meetings or newsletter _____

Please mail memberships and contributions to: Friends of the ACFL, 619 Commercial #32, Anacortes, WA 98221

Thank you to all friends who have renewed their dues and a reminder to those who haven't sent in this year - we need it! Keeping your dues current with the Friends of the Forest is one of the best ways to Think Globally and Act Locally. On Fidalgo Island, thankfully we have the ACFL, and it needs Friends to ensure its preservation. Our Education Program depends on your support. Thank you!



FRIENDS OF THE ACFL

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FRIENDS OF THE FOREST ANNUAL BENEFIT

*Saturday, October 20 / 5:30 to 11pm
Port Warehouse / 1st & Commercial / Anacortes*

MUSIC – Fidalgo Swing & Spoonshine Duo

DINNER – Gere-a-Deli

SILENT AUCTION

LIVE AUCTION

*TICKETS \$50 / person
\$400 / table of 8
\$500 / table of 10*

*Watermark Book Company, Friends of the Forest office / 293-3725
or online at: www.friendsoftheacfl.org*

*Joel Brock, "Lisa's Forest," pastel, acrylic and charcoal, 23" x 30"
photo by How It Works*

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