



# *Friends of the Forest*

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

**Volume 26 • Issue 3 • Summer 2012**



Gene Murphy with Jonn Lunsford getting ready to share good CEP news at an annual meeting.



It is with deep appreciation and heartfelt fondness that we acknowledge the passing of our friend and former long-term board member, Gene Murphy. (1922-2012)

Gene gave years of dedicated service to the Friends of the Forest from the late 80's through to the success of the Conservation Easement Program. His determination and understanding of the detail within the big picture were key to the development of the CEP. He tirelessly shepherded the concept and ultimate agreement with the City through the years' long process. He then served on the CEP committee until the original goal of 1500 acres was met.

Gene was also a founding board member of the Skagit Land Trust, an organization created in concert with the effort to preserve the ACFL in perpetuity.

Our condolences are extended to his wife Virginia, family and friends. Thank you for sharing him with us for so long. His legacy will grow and endure in the beauty of our woods. - Denise Crowe

## **Forest Magic**

In the morning it is a  
sweet bread of relaxation.  
The soft moist damp dirt  
between my toes like dough.  
The spider webs glistening  
in the sun's rays.

During the afternoon it is a  
gentle rage of wisdom.  
The mysterious forest waiting  
for its next prey.  
Each second majestic as a  
Butterfly flaps its wings.

By night the forest is  
a scary trap of solitude.  
Shadows creeping up on you,  
branches trying to get your  
attention.

Marco Antonio Gaspar  
7th Grade, Anacortes Middle School

Written in class with visiting poet, Sam Greene  
following a Watershed Discovery field trip.



7th Grade students writing their observations at Smiley's Bottom wetland as part of our Watershed Discovery Program, conducted each spring.



# GRAVEL: Why we use it in the ACFL

by Dave Oicles

I bring up this topic due to the many reactions we receive from trail users after ACFL Staff repairs a trail with tons of gravel left behind. The comments range from sheer happiness to “Why did you ruin a fun riding trail?” Gravel, in various forms, has been used for over 20 years in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands to repair mud holes, fix water issues, and to prevent erosion of the native soils. Most comments about gravel observed on the trail surfaces relate to trail usage. For some hard-core mountain bike riders, any change to the trail takes away the challenge of riding. Others, who enjoy a casual walk or hike through the forest may prefer to have an easier surface to walk on. For me, jogging through the trail system, I prefer to leave most of the soil and mud in the woods and not bring it home with me, so a drier trail is preferred. When it’s too muddy, I stick to the paved road trail system, like the Tommy Thompson trail.

We who manage an entire trail system like the ACFL, have to look at the overall picture of the trails. We have to think about each of the trail users (motorcycle riders, horseback riders, mountain bike riders, hikers, walkers, joggers, etc.) and all the the various skill levels each of these user groups bring to the trails. Age and health of trail users are also taken into account. The proximity of trails to homes is considered, as these trails tend to be more heavily used by all user groups of various age and skill. Trails that are heavily used and close to homes tend to need more repairs. Trails that are more remote tend to be more rustic, challenging and most likely never receive gravel as a method of repair. We also have to look at managing these trails for future generations. Keeping the trails in good condition is critical for future use.

What does adding gravel do to a trail? Well, it depends on what type of gravel is being used, and what problem on the trail is being repaired. Deep pot holes that cannot be drained are filled with rock and capped with 5/8” gravel so it is easy to walk and ride on. In many areas the trail is raised to get it out of a wet and muddy spot, then gravel is mixed with the native soil to “resurface” the trail. This helps prevent erosion and mud. Native soils after years of trail traffic break down and become compact, not allowing water to drain naturally; mud holes develop. Many trail users start going around these spots and before you know it the trail becomes 8’ wide as more and more people go around the mud. Does gravel work for all repairs? No way. Some trails are rerouted to a better location to resolve erosion issues. Some trails are repaired by whatever we can find close by to fix it, such as native rocks, logs, and soil from an old uprooted tree. Does gravel last forever? Yes and No. Some places that get repaired with gravel never need attention again while others need a yearly touch up. How much gravel do we use yearly? Roughly about 120 tons a year, but much of that goes to repairing pot holes in parking lots and dirt roads leading to Heart, Whistle, and Little Cranberry Lakes. Less that 2 miles of the 52 miles of trails in the ACFL have noticeable gravel at any given time. Gravel has been a great tool for trail maintenance and repair. How do we get the gravel out onto the trails? Now that’s a secret! Enjoy your wonderful trail system.

## 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.

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Jonn Lunsford 299-1953

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### PHONE

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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.

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www.friendsoftheacfl.org

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Kara Fox	420-7372	Jan 2013	karafox@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.



# Friends of the Forest 2012 Scholarship Recipients

Our scholarship was created in 2009 to honor and encourage a student whose educational goals are in line with our mission. Each year we look for a student with a strong desire to be involved in the natural world and with future ambitions in the field of environmental studies. Because of an outstanding applicant pool this year, we had difficulty selecting just one student and were delighted when our board elected to award two - \$1000.00 scholarships.

Monica Glover is graduating from Anacortes High School with a 3.9 GPA. She plans to attend the University of Oklahoma to pursue a degree in science, perhaps environmental science or marine biology. Monica was the Vice President of the AHS Green Club this year while participating in many volunteer projects and extracurricular activities. Monica's family moved often because her father is in the military. She arrived in Anacortes prior to her junior year and speaks of the challenges she faced, "The move actually helped me grow in so many ways and I've become a strong, compassionate, determined young woman." Her motto is, "Everything happens for a reason." Her teacher's words say it all, **"This is a student with a definite social consciousness who will give back to the community in some form or another."**

Rob Roy McGregor is a senior at the University of British Columbia majoring in Forest Sciences/Forest Ecology. He loves the ACFL and as a young boy called our forest his playground. Rob went through all of our forest education programs and has continued to join our community hikes when he is in Anacortes. He says, "Today the forests of the world are faced with an unprecedented number of threats. After I complete my degree at UBC, I will be one step closer to being capable of meeting these challenges. **The ultimate goal is to preserve the forests that I've been so fortunate to have in my life, to inspire generations."**

We are so very pleased to award a scholarship to each of these deserving individuals and we thank all of the students who applied. As quoted from our Education Director, Denise Crowe, "It is affirming to see students with a passion for nature, concern for the environment and a willingness to enter a field where their impact and leadership will help ensure the future of natural places."



From left: Jean Andrich, Rob McGregor, Denise Crowe

Photo by Kevin Bright

## Heart Lake Milfoil Update.....

by Jonn Lunsford

Near the center of Fidalgo Island, Heart Lake sits in the shadow of Mt. Erie and Sugarloaf. Underneath the surface of the lake, a murky problem is growing in the form of an invasive plant: Eurasian milfoil. It hitched a ride to Heart Lake over a dozen years ago; now the milfoil has hybridized with northern milfoil and formed dense patches in nearly 1/3 of the lake.

The City is working with the State Department of Ecology on a plan to deal with the milfoil and problems it is suspected of causing. Boaters and anglers can tell you that milfoil makes trolling, paddling and fishing more difficult, due in part to its thick growth near the surface. Scientists studying the lake have also noticed the disappearance of some native aquatic plants, possibly due to the thick stands of milfoil.

Funded by a grant from the State DOE in 2010, public meetings have been held to discuss problems with the milfoil and what to do about it. A committee including members of the City Council, the Forest Board, Parks and Recreation Commission, Samish Nation, Fidalgo Fly Fishers, down-stream neighbors and city staff worked on the draft plan.

The plan (officially known as the Integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan) is required by the State DOE before milfoil can be managed at the lake. It was presented to the public in March and recently recommended on to the City Council by the Forest Board.

In brief, the plan calls for management of the milfoil by using diver suction dredging to try and remove the plants. It also calls for testing herbicides in plots on the lake. Because the milfoil at Heart Lake is a hybrid, it is unclear what type of herbicide would effectively curtail its growth. The plan currently calls for two 10' x 10' test plots, but this may change depending on feedback from groups with more experience with the problem.

The City Council discussed the Heart Lake Milfoil Plan, took public comment at their meeting on June 18th and approved a revised plan. For more information visit the City website at: <http://www.cityofanacortes.org>.

*The Friends of the Forest had a representative on the committee and provided input during this process. We think starting with diver dredging and testing small areas with herbicides is a prudent course of action for Heart Lake. While we typically favor leaving the ACFL in a natural state, in this situation we agree that intervention is necessary for the overall health of Heart Lake. We are especially concerned with the welfare of native plants and animals that are part of the natural ecosystem of the lake.*

*-Jean Andrich*

# Summer 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.*

The Friends of the Forest is a not for profit, citizen organization dedicated to the preservation of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands through education, outreach and stewardship. We have a multi-layered education program that strives to meet the needs of all Fidalgo Island residents. Our education program includes K-12 guided school field trips, Adult/Senior hikes, All Ages hikes, Forest Discovery Day Camp, habitat restoration efforts, Ethnobotany field seminars, a quarterly newsletter and our two comprehensive school district programs: Growing Wild- native plants for all 3rd graders, and Middle School Watershed Discovery for all students in 7th grade. Our community hikes are FREE and no registration is required. Please join Naturalist Denise Crowe this summer as we continue to explore and learn more about the ACFL together. For more information about our group or these hikes, please contact Denise Crowe or Jean Andrich at 293-3725. You may also visit our website [www.friendsoftheacfl.org](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org) or inquire by email at [info@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:info@friendsoftheacfl.org). These hikes focus on wildlife and human experience, so we ask that you leave your four legged friends at home.

Hope to see you in the woods!

## Upcoming Events!

### **Art Walk** - September 7th

We will once again be hosting the September Art Walk at Watermark Book Company. Please join your *Friends* for refreshments, art preview, forest conversation and the opportunity to purchase Annual Benefit Event tickets.

### **Annual Benefit Event** – October 20th.

The *Friends of the Forest* will be at the Port Warehouse again this year, starting at 5:30pm. Join us for “The Best Party of the Year,” with funds raised going to support the *Friends* Forest Education and Stewardship Program. This program provides a wide range of educational activities in the ACFL that promote a greater understanding of and support for our unique community treasure.

Tickets: \$50.00 per person with \$25.00 being tax deductible/ \$400.00 per table of 8 or \$500.00 per table of 10. Tickets will be available through the *Friends of the Forest* office, **Watermark Book Company** or online at [www.friendsoftheacfl.org](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org) beginning in September. Highlights include; music by Fidalgo Swing and Spoonshine Duo, dinner provided by Gere-a-Deli and both a silent and short live auction. A few of the auction items include: A week in a Kauai guesthouse plus original artwork by Leo Osborne, Jennifer Bowman, Cynthia Richardson, Carol Anne Wilson, Bob Elkins and much more! If you have something special to donate to the live or silent auction, please let us know. Sponsorships are also available.

Look for updates on our website: [www.friendsoftheacfl.org](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org)

## ALL AGES HIKES

*Great for families and folks of all ages, these are hearty hikes with forest lore suited to the day's participants.*

### All around Little Cranberry

Saturday, July 21st  
10:00 am until a little after noon

Little Cranberry Lake holds a rich convergence of habitat with bog islands, rocky shore and mixed forest surrounding it. This is beaver, river otter, raven, and alligator lizard terrain. July brings forth a multitude of berries and deep green growth. Learn all about this amazing place and enjoy a challenging hike for all ages. Take Georgia south off of Oakes and follow up to the ACFL road, take a right and follow to the parking lot.

### All around Heart

Saturday, August 11th  
10:00 am to noon

There is no better place to be in the middle of the summer than in the middle of our woods. Get to know the heart of the forest on this wonderful journey all the way around Heart Lake. Lush deciduous areas flow into an amazing old growth grove. Meet at the Heart Lake parking lot.

### Mitten Pond Loop

Saturday, September 8th  
10:00 am to noon

Summer isn't over yet! The cool smell of water floats up the path as we near Mitten Pond. Whirligig beetles spin shining patterns in the glowing green duckweed. Dragonflies drift and zoom around us. Sound good? Please come along! Meet at the ACFL kiosk on A Avenue and 37th.

## SENIOR/ADULT HIKES

*A little bit gentler, with an adult level flora and fauna focus.....*

### Erie View Trail

Friday, July 13th  
10:00 am to noon

This is a trail of wonders, twisting and turning through varied terrain all the way to a hidden meadow. The views of Lake Erie and Mount Erie are a rare treat. Meet at the base of Mount Erie on Ray Auld Drive.

### Northwest Whistle Lake

Friday, August 10th  
10:00 am to noon

This route is a regular favorite, providing spectacular views and deep woods feel with just the right amount of physical challenge. Meet at the Whistle Lake parking lot.

### Beaver Ponds

Friday, September 14th  
10:00 am to noon

The Little Cranberry Lake area is filled with a network of beaver ponds created and maintained by local beaver families. We will explore trails that reveal their lodges, dams, mounds, and other daytime clues to their nighttime secret ways. Meet at the ACFL kiosk on A Avenue and 37th.

## SUMMER ADULT FITNESS HIKE:

Friday, July 20th  
1 pm to 4 pm

Join Board Members Jean and Lin for a fast paced work out adventure. Prepare to cover a good amount of trail

on this three hour tour of Little Cranberry and Heart terrain. An optional ending to the hike will be a swim in Little Cranberry! Take Friday afternoon off, bring water, a snack, perhaps a swimsuit and plan to hike nearly 9 miles. Meet at the Little Cranberry Lake parking lot.

## FOREST DISCOVERY PROGRAM

This is an activity oriented summer day camp for boys and girls ages 7 to 12. Each day we explore a different area of our Anacortes Community Forest lands. Please go to our website for more information: [www.friendsoftheacfl.org](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org).



All ages hikers at Little Cranberry.



# An Idiot in the Forest.....

by Scott Gudmundsen

There was quite an impressive response to last quarter's *Idiot in the Forest* article. A total of 2 people were wildly supportive. So, here's another chance for you to read about more weird and interesting stuff that can be found in our community forest lands.

There is a hemlock tree (I think) on trail 210 that has a "pocket." It is almost as if the tree were wearing cargo pants. I guess trees need places to keep their accessories too such as sticks, twigs, leaves, bugs, mascara, pepper spray, etc. Take your family out on trail 210 south of Heart Lake and help your kids find the pocket.



A little further down the same trail is a tree I call Twinkle-toes. It reminds me of a ballerina. It is a fairly tall tree standing on just two slender roots with a lot of open space beneath the trunk. Many trees in our forest grow on old stumps. I've always been amazed how they can get started. With all that nutritious rotting wood, Twinkle-toes must have thought it was a way to get a good foothold. I'll have to ask Denise why that is. Unfortunately, the stump that Twinkle-toes got started on has rotted completely away, and Twinkle-toes is now on his/her own. A big gust of wind will likely knock that poor tree down. So there is a downside to growing on someone else's trunk rather than just getting your own start in the ground. I should tell my kids that....



Our forest is a wonderful place full of many odd shapes. I see trees shaped like letters all the time. Trail 211 has a tree shaped like a big Y. Or as Yoda would say: "Shaped like a big Y that tree is." My apologies go out to the readers who are Star Wars geeks if I have mis-quoted Yoda. Trail 216 on the way up to Mt Erie has a tree that is shaped like an upside down question mark. It even has the dot on the top (not really – I just wish it did).

Trail 220 has a tree that looks like tree Siamese Twins. There are several trees in our forest that look like they have grown together into one tree. In the case of the Siamese Twins, they are almost identical trees on each side. If they are not twins, then either they really like each other or they are just fighting for their share of personal space – sort of like a tree rush hour.



The search for interesting fungi and mushrooms continues. This quarter's article features a fungus that is multi-striped and curvy, pictured here. It is really beautiful and is found growing on dead logs. Of course, I don't know the real name so I call it Seersucker Fungi because it reminds me of an old shirt I used to have. I'm sure Denise knows the real name. Try this activity for kids ages 2-130. Say the following really fast 3 times: "A fungus is any of a kingdom of saprophytic parasitic spore-producing eukaryotic typically filamentous organisms". (Source: Merriam -Webster dictionary iPhone app.)

## Happy trails in the forest!

Denise says - "Seersucker Fungi" is a fun personal name for this specimen from the genus *Polyporus*.

# Thank you to Friends of the Forest 2012 Members and Contributors!

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## Memorial Donations

In memory of Kay Andrich by Marilyn & Gene Derig, Betty Rockwell, Tom & Margaret Thompson, Cindy & Don Morton, Dale & Elizabeth Fowler, Kay Glade, Hershel & Bonita Janz.

*Please let us know if your name is missing, misspelled or if you prefer to be listed differently.*





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#### 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!