



# Friends of the Forest

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

Volume 27 • Issue 3 • Summer 2013

## WAYS TO GIVE

*Our work depends on a healthy mix of funding sources. All contributions to our group are tax deductible. Please consider the following options for financial contribution to our organization.*

### 1. Active Membership

Dues are due in January! There are different categories of membership to suit your preference. Any contributions to our group above your membership level are greatly appreciated. See our membership form on the back page.

### 2. Individual Contributions

We greatly appreciate any contributions to help support our education and outreach program. You can make these in honor or in memory.

### 3. Friends of the Forest Endowment Fund

We have an endowment fund established with the Skagit Community Foundation. The purpose of this fund is to create an endowment that will eventually provide interest income to our organization. This is an excellent option for sizeable donations to our group.

### 4. Planned Giving

If you are making estate plans, please consider including our organization.

You may contact Denise Crowe or Jean Andrich (360-293-3725) at our office to discuss any of these options.



## Friends of the Forest Open House

Join us on July 17th from 6 to 8 pm for an Open House. We are excited to show off our lovely new office which is located inside the historic Depot Building at 611 R Avenue. Since the office is shared with The Anacortes Farmers Market, we thought it fitting to open our doors when the Farmer's Market will be in full swing. Plan to drop by for a visit, see our new office, enjoy refreshments, listen to music and shop in the outdoor market if you choose. We hope to see you there!

## Friends of the Forest Scholarship – Three recipients for 2013!

Since 2009, we have offered a scholarship to an Anacortes High School senior or graduate currently enrolled in college. The purpose of our scholarship is to see our mission of environmental education, stewardship and outreach be carried forward to future generations. We specifically look for a student with a strong desire to be involved in the natural world while seeking a degree in environmental studies. Our applicant pool was very impressive this year and our board couldn't select just one, so we awarded scholarships to three very talented and deserving individuals!



Photo – from left to right  
Denise Crowe, Lin Nichols, Colin Middleton, Ivy Gilliland, Esther Chang

**Esther Chang** has been a very involved leader in the Green Club at Anacortes High School and has volunteered extensively throughout Skagit County. She says her Environmental Science class helped to educate her in the importance of sustaining our environment. Esther will be attending the University of Washington and majoring in French with a minor in Environmental Science. She would like to incorporate her passion for languages and the environment; she eventually plans to travel to other countries to help improve their impact on the environment.

**Collin Middleton** is a very well rounded young man. He is a scholar, athlete, student leader and community volunteer who found time to climb Mt Rainier last summer! While participating in the Green Club, he realized how many people in our community are working to preserve the environment. He decided that a career in Environmental Science is what he wanted to do. Colin says, "The reason I am so passionate about protecting the environment is that I spend so much time enjoying it." Colin will be attending Western Washington University, majoring in Environmental Engineering and Chemistry.

**Ivy Gilliland** says the Green Club at Anacortes High School inspired her to look into Environmental Studies as a college path, "The Green Club has given me community service opportunities that have influenced me to care more about the environment." Ivy has been Treasurer and Vice President of the Green Club. Ivy's first hike was with the Friends of the Forest in elementary school, she still remembers the activities from that hike! Ivy plans to attend the Evergreen State College and major in Environmental Studies.

**Congratulations to all three of the Friends of the Forest 2013 Scholarship Recipients. We are fortunate to have such passionate individuals leading efforts to preserve and protect our environment. We would also like to thank Mr. Garcia, Green Club Advisor at AHS for inspiring students in the field of Environmental Studies.**



# South Mt. Erie Update

By Jonn Lunsford

The south side of Mt. Erie was in the news recently because Skagit County was taking public comment on development of a 40 acre parcel. There was some confusion as to what was going to happen to this property that borders the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. Because the permit application listed a potential 900,000 board feet timber harvest, there was speculation that the land would be clear cut and developed with several homes.

The permit application came as a shock to many locals. The community has expressed a longstanding desire to have a trail along the south side of Mt. Erie and conserve the forests and meadows located there. Many residents assumed that the city owned most of the mountain, but on the south side, private property extends just beyond the 800' elevation level.

When the permit was filed the city contacted the new landowners, Frank and Christine Harkness, and discussed its interest in recreational access and conservation on their land. The landowners explained that they only planned to clear for and build a single home on the property and create a road to the home site. They generously granted the public access across their land for recreational use which opens several heretofore closed climbing routes and scramble trails on Mt. Erie.

The permission granted by the Harkness family and a previous easement from Bill and Sally Turner on neighboring land allows the public to traverse many of the trails on south Mt. Erie. But the public still can not travel all the way around the south side of the mountain. The route, known as the South Erie Trail, includes a parcel of private land that is closed to the public. So the path is not yet a loop, but an "out and back" trail. Please respect the "Trail Closed" signs along this route.

As with the other ACFL trails that cross private land, please stay on trails and in this case the established climbing routes, pack out any trash, keep dogs on leash and basically respect the land we are being allowed to use. We appreciate your help and stewardship.

**Editor's note-** The Skagit County Planning Dept. has issued a mitigated determination of non-significance for the Harkness property permit application. You can access the document on the Skagit County website. Specific restrictions include wetland protections, and a Peregrine Falcon nesting habitat buffer on the top portion of the property. Comments on the determination are due by June 28th. The Friends of the Forest will be commenting.

FOREST ADVISORY BOARD				CITY OF ANACORTES ELECTED OFFICIALS				
The City Forest Advisory Board meets every first Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at Fidalgo Center and is open to the public.				Mayor, 4-year term, at large, salaried - 299-1950 Council Members (7) 4-year terms - 3 from Wards, 4 at Large - 293-1900				
FOREST BOARD MEMBERS		PARKS & FOREST LANDS MANAGER		NAME	E-MAIL	PHONE	TERM ENDS	
Sandra Starbuck	901-9179			Mayor Dean Maxwell	coa.mayor@cityofanacortes.org	299-1950	12/31/13	
Brian Wetcher	293-7624	Jonn Lunsford	299-1953	W1 Ryan Walters	www.ryanwalters.org	610-7770	12/31/15	
Marty Laumbattus	293-7940			W2 Brad Adams	brada@cityofanacortes.org	293-3056	12/31/15	
Rick Boge	299-2692			W3 Eric Johnson	www.anacorteseric.org	840-5415	12/31/15	
Aaron Rasmussen	293-3018			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			BOARD MEMBERS			Friends of the Forest Board Meetings are at 7pm the second Wednesday of each month. We meet in the Depot Building, located at 611 R Avenue, Anacortes. Meetings are open to the public. Please come and get involved.		
President	Andy Stewart	299-9406	Andy Stewart	299-9406	Jan. 2014			akccstewart@earthlink.net
Vice President	Monica Ochs	293-6003	Jean Andrich	293-0124	Jan. 2014			jean@friendsoftheacfl.org
Secretary	Jean Andrich	293-0124	Lin Nichols	293-3826	Jan. 2014			lin.nichols@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Lin Nichols	299-3826	Monica Ochs	293-6003	Jan. 2014			monica.ochs@gmail.com
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH DIRECTOR			Bill Dietrich	588-0118	Jan. 2014			williamdietrich@comcast.net
Denise Crowe 293-3725			Denise Crowe	293-8426	Jan 2015	denise@friendsoftheacfl.org		
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR			Scott Gudmundsen	293-1550	Jan 2015	robertgudmundsen@shell.com		
Jean Andrich 293-3725			Charlie Collins	873-8873	Jan 2015	troutdental@yahoo.com		
WEBSITE ADDRESS			Ed Gastellum	293-7626	Jan 2015	ecgastel@wavecable.com		
www.friendsoftheacfl.org								



## Heart Lake Milfoil Update

By Ranger Dave Oicles

In the spring newsletter, we reported that the work to remove non-native invasive milfoil from Heart Lake would not begin until next year. This has now been changed and we will begin the process in July and August of this year. We are very excited on improving the quality and health of Heart Lake, and this first step will help management determine the future course of action on controlling this invasive plant.

Starting this summer, hired divers trained in aquatic plant identification and removal will begin removing aquatic plants, consisting mostly of hornwort and milfoil, around the boat launch and parking area on Heart Lake. The vegetation will be hand-pulled, brought to the surface and taken to the shore to be hauled away. The plan is to clear an area from the shoreline out to 150' covering approximately 3 acres of the 63 acres of water surface. The desired result is to improve the quality of swimming and fishing from the parking area. This process however does not eradicate milfoil, but rather attempts to control the growth within the 3 acre plot.

Also beginning this summer, two sample plots will be set up in portions of Heart Lake to test the use of 2 different herbicides on the milfoil. Our Heart Lake milfoil is unique to Washington State, comprised of a hybrid between Eurasian Milfoil and Northern Milfoil, which is the native milfoil. There is limited experience in managing the hybrid milfoil, so the Washington State Department of Ecology is very excited about our attempt to foil the milfoil and is very supportive in determining the best course of action. The sample plot size has not been determined yet, but the desire is to create the smallest test site to be effective. The plan is to curtain off the test plot sites using floats and a sheeting barrier, which will contain the herbicide inside the test plots. Professionals who have designed and installed these barriers will be hired to create our test plots and apply the herbicide, and will conduct follow-up inspections for the effectiveness of the herbicides.



It should be noted that other issues in Heart Lake are visible besides the abundance of milfoil and hornwort; specifically the large floating mats of filamentous algae that can be seen while driving down Heart Lake Road. These mats make it impossible to swim, fish, and boat in the areas these mats are present. Filamentous algae thrive in waters with an excess of nutrients, too much sunlight, and low Oxygen levels. It's unknown at this time what factors are playing out in Heart Lake to cause the algae bloom, but we hope that the control of milfoil will help return a balance to Heart Lake.



Funding for this project comes from a Grant through the Washington Department of Ecology. The funding is for a two year period from July 2013 through June of 2015. The period for treatment is limited to the time the milfoil is actively growing which is usually from April through September. You can view the Heart Lake Milfoil Management Plan at the City website: [www.cityofanacortes.org](http://www.cityofanacortes.org). Go to the Parks and Recreation home page and find the plan under top stories.



# Summer Calendar 2013



*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 non-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 the 7th grade.

Our community hikes are FREE and no registration is required. Please join Naturalist Denise Crowe, for summer fun 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 human and wildlife experience, so we ask that you please leave your four legged friends at home. Hope to see you in the woods!

## All Ages Hikes

(Great for families and folks of all ages, these are hearty hikes with a naturalist guide.)

### All Around Little Cranberry

Saturday, July 6th

10am until a little after noon

Little Cranberry Lake holds a rich convergence of habitat with bog islands, rocky shore and mixed forest surrounding. 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.

### Mount Erie Southside Trail

Saturday, July 27th

10 am until afternoon

Meet at the base of Mount Erie on Ray Auld Drive. We will carpool to the closest limited parking area with easy access to the newly opened southern flank trail. Explore the amazing views and compelling flora and fauna of this unique terrain with friends.

### All Around Heart

Saturday, August 10th

10am until noon

There is no better place to be in the middle of 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 7th

10am until 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 Ave. and 37th.

## FOREST DISCOVERY PROGRAM

Session 1 - July 30 through August 1

Session 2 – August 6 through 8.



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. For more information, please go to our website: [www.friendsoftheacfl.org](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org)



## Senior/Adult Hikes

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



### Erie View Trail

Friday, July 12th  
10am until noon

This is a trail of wonders, twisting and turning through prime wetland wildlife corridor 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

Friday, August 9th  
10am until 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 13th  
10am until 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 Ave. and 37th.

### Adult Fitness Hike

Friday, July 19th  
1pm until 4pm

**A challenging physical adventure featuring the hills of Whistle Lake!**

Join Scott, Lin and Jean for another fast paced, hilly workout adventure as we climb Sugarloaf, Mt. Erie, Sugar Cube and Little Round Top. Take Friday afternoon off, bring water and a snack and meet at the Heart Lake parking lot.

***This is a strenuous 8 mile hike!***

## Upcoming Events:

**Art Walk – October 4th** • We will be hosting the October Art Walk at Watermark Book Company. Please join your Friends for refreshments, art preview, forest conversation and the opportunity to purchase Annual Event tickets.

### **Annual Benefit Event – November 2nd**

The Friends of the Forest Annual Benefit will be held at the Port Warehouse again this year, starting at 5:30. Join us for *The Best Party of the Year*, while raising funds 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 our unique community treasure.

Tickets are \$50.00 per person (\$25.00 tax deductible) and tables of 8 or 10 are also available. 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 by Gere-a-Deli, a silent and short live auction. If you have something special to donate to the auction, please let us know. Sponsorships are also available. Look for updates on our website: [www.friendsoftheacfl.org](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org)

**i Membership Notes** - We did not have space to print the membership list, please refer to your mailing label to see if you are current.

- Please renew or join today! We accept donations online. Please visit our website and go to Contribute.
- Confused on a hike location? Check our website for links to driving directions to each hike location.
- Our regular office hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 am to 1 pm and always by appointment.
- Need an ACFL trail map? We have them for sale in our office or visit our website for a complete list of local sources.

[www.friendsoftheacfl.org](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org)

[info@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:info@friendsoftheacfl.org)



## Crowe's Nest

Greetings Friends,

The nature library is winnowed down; file cabinets moved, detritus recycled, old photos and artifacts unearthed. The process of our recent move to the Depot after 20 years in the Keystone building brought me back to those first tender roots of the work. How quickly they took hold, nurtured by the forest and all that it provides. Work steadily guided by the need to grow in our knowledge, respect, and understanding of this place. Work that has flourished in response to the desire of the people of our island to know more of the nature around us and in us, and enabled our community to love and care more for our unique wild home.

We have accomplished so much as an organization in cooperation with the City; the creation and implementation of the Conservation Easement Program which has assured legal protection of the ACFL and raised over 1.8 million dollars in the CEP endowment fund, successful invasive plant removal, and essential ongoing trail and forest stewardship. Community involvement has been key, and our education work has been fundamental to that success.

There have been well over 20,000 participants in our forest education programs over the past 20 years. 5,000 7th grade students have become watershed discoverers in that time, each having gained basic awareness of our island's ecology and their place in it. 5,000 native animal creature features have been assigned and nearly that many graded. This program has become a rite of passage, a vital tradition that continues. Our Forest Discovery summer day camp, community hikes, 3rd grade native plant Growing Wild program, and many other activities have all contributed to the strengthening of our forest community.

It doesn't seem possible to have led thousands of hikes through the forest, for I still learn something new on every trip. These are the personal rewards- to know the growth rate of an alder grove through the decades or the disappearance of a nurse log under a tiptoeing cedar, to feel the strumming vibration of bumblebees in berry blossoms on Little Cranberry Lake's south shore, and greet the cedar waxwings steady as summer at Big Beaver Pond, to acknowledge cascara's return to the understory, or discover another rare western heart leaved twayblade orchid patch and witness the nectaring mosquito that pollinates the diminutive flower masquerading as his mate.



We are all a part of this place. Whenever we enter the forest we can choose to enter with openness and peaceful participation, or a dominating and careless exertion of our will. What we do every step of the way matters. It may not seem important in the moment, but over time it gathers and builds. In our community forest, what we do becomes what we create together.

*Daniel Crowe*

Sugarloaf hikers in May pause to contemplate the flower head of the Purple Sanicle. Though we tried, we did not hear a Who.





## An Idiot in the Forest.....

by Scott Gudmundsen

One of the first signs of spring is the sudden growth of Skunk Cabbage seen in many of the boggy areas of our forest lands. They like to grow in shallow water and start out a bright yellow color and grow quickly into a bright green, large leafed plant. You know what happens when you take a lavender flower and rub it between your fingers and you get that wonderful lavender smell? Try that with a piece of Skunk Cabbage. Surprise! It smells like a skunk. Luckily that odor doesn't linger indefinitely like the real thing.



I'm going to contact one of those exclusive Parisian Fashion Houses and request that they consider Skunk Cabbage as the main ingredient for their next signature men's cologne. "Eau de Skunk Cabbage brought to you by Yves St. Laurent and The Idiot in the Forest." Elizabeth Taylor did it, why can't I? Skunk Cabbage looks like it would make a wonderful salad too. I'll have to ask Denise if it is edible and how it would go with a little Passion Fruit Vinaigrette. I wonder what my breath will be like after.

*Denise says, "Scott's new cologne may be harmless enough as long as he is happy to attract beetles and flies, but his breath would be the least of his concerns after trying his salad recipe. Skunk Cabbage causes extreme mucous membrane irritation if consumed raw, burning and blisters could result from mouth and throat on through the digestive tract. The root of this plant was historically only eaten after extensive cooking with a specific process. The leaves were used for food wrapping, but not eaten themselves."*

There is a very intriguing tree that I call the Saguaro Tree just off and west of trail 10 and north of the intersection with trail 126 in the Little Cranberry Lake Forest Lands. It is tall with 4 large branches evenly separated and curving immediately upward. It looks like a big Saguaro Cactus. It is slightly off trail and not readily noticeable from the trail unless you are looking closely for it. The accompanying photo was taken from trail 10 with a telephoto lens. It strikes me as a very aggressive tree trying to get more than its fair share of the 3-4 days of sunlight that we get here each year.



This quarter's featured mushroom looks like French Toast. The wetness on it even looks like syrup. So we'll call it the French Toast Mushroom. The official name per the book, "Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest" is *Phaeolus schweinitzii* (not a typo). Its common name is Dyer's Polypore because it has been used in past times for dyeing wool.

As promised in a prior issue, I led a Friends of the Forest fitness hike in April. The hike was advertised as an all downhill hike because I was hoping to attract a lot of lazy people. Unfortunately, no lazy people showed up. The people who did show up were actually expecting "fitness." So we had to do a real hike that was very tiring and actually required physical exercise and stamina. This was very annoying. I might lead another hike; but would like to make a special appeal to the lazy people out there to try and attend the next time – I'll even come and pick you up.....

Happy Trails in the forest.



**FRIENDS OF THE ACFL**  
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## 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, P.O. Box 2213, Anacortes, WA 98221  
or visit us at 611 R Avenue, 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!