



Friends of the Forest

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

Volume 29 • Issue 4 • Fall 2015

Friends of the Forest Annual Benefit Event

November 7th at the Port Warehouse.

The Friends of the Forest Annual Benefit will be held at the Port Warehouse again this year. Join us for The Best Party of the Year, while raising funds to support the Friends' Forest Education and Stewardship Programs! Our programs provide a wide range of educational activities for all ages that promote greater enjoyment, knowledge, and care for our unique community forest treasure.



We made a few changes.... to make the event even more fun! We are starting at 5 pm to allow more time for the silent auction and time to socialize with your forest friends. For a more relaxed atmosphere, Bob Vaux will be our Master of Ceremonies/Auctioneer for the evening.

The live auction will be shorter with only a few items and a direct giving opportunity through "Bid for Kids." We will also offer an easier check in/check out system. We are excited about the changes and look forward to a wonderful event for all!

Highlights include; music by Fidalgo Swing, dinner by Gere-a-Deli plus 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

We are pleased to announce this year's Featured Artist - Painter, Cathy Schoenberg. Cathy is a local artist who creates large, colorful botanical paintings that engulf the eye with color. Cathy graciously supports our work in the ACFL and we think her painting "Friends of the Forest" speaks to our mission.

Tickets are available through the Friends of the Forest Office, Watermark Book Company or online at: www.friendsoftheacfl.org. Tickets are \$65.00 per person (\$30.00 tax deductible) and tables of 8 and 10 are available for \$500.00 and \$600.00. *After many years we have had to raise our ticket prices to cover increasing costs, thank you for your understanding. We hope to see you there!*

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 contributions 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.



Membership notes:

-  January starts the new membership year, regardless of what month you joined or renewed.
To save resources, we do not send out reminder postcards. Please renew or join today!
-  Confused on a hike location? Check out 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 you may also visit our website for a complete list of local sources.



www.friendsoftheacfl.org / info@friendsoftheacfl.org



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/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!



CROWE'S NEST

Greetings Friends!



Forest Discoverers having fun on Sugarloaf Mountain

Fall is upon us, bringing a bountiful community hike calendar and our Third Grade Native Plant Program, Growing Wild. I can't wait to be in classrooms and leading field trips again, connecting students with their native plants and the natural places of our island. Each year, this time with the students brings such heartfelt learning and rich forest experience.

Our Spring and Summer programs were more popular than ever. The Spring school program schedule was packed with Seventh Grade Watershed Discovery, STEM middle school hikes, and Growing Wild field trips.

Forest Discovery Summer Day Camp was greatly enhanced with help from Louisa Crowe and Dylan Fox. Our three day long adventures were filled with bat cave exploring, berry eating, journal making, water bug scooping, storytelling, small world creating, and hiking splendor.

Our new adult oriented program, Tracing Forests and Seas, was a grand success. The inaugural group of 12+ spent two amazing days in August drawing and writing together with leaders Kate Clark and Denise Crowe.

Community hike participants are at an all time high. Many newcomers continue to join our hikes, showing a curiosity and delight in the natural wonders of their newly chosen home. Many long term residents are also new attendees, finding the time to share in the joys of our forest and open to learning more with new friends.

The epic drought has softened a bit with an early September dose of deep rain. Yet weather patterns are forecast to be holding steady with a large El Nino effect. Throughout the year we have seen an advanced timetable of bud and bloom and fruit. Now, we see leaves falling before their time. Plant mortality is way beyond the norm, and I know I am not alone in wondering just what the future holds for us here. The fierce windstorm on August 29th was the strongest summer storm in our state recorded history. It brought trees and branches down throughout the forest and greater region, bringing with it an increasing sense of seasonal unpredictability. The Farmer's Almanac is calling for a hard, cold winter in our region. As we wait to see what plays out, be sure to spend some time in the forest, drinking in the Autumn light.



Fall Calendar 2015

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, Ethnobotany and Nature Writing 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 us this fall as we continue to explore and learn more about the ACFL together.

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.

Whistle Lake
Saturday, September 26th
10am until noon

Summer has passed, but there is still plenty to love at our most beautiful and deepest lake on the island. This is a hearty hike, be ready to explore. Meet at the Whistle Lake parking lot at the end of Whistle Lake Road.

Sugarloaf Mountain
Saturday, October 10th
10 am until noon

Experience the golden glow of Sugarloaf Mountain in October. 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 of Heart Lake Road.

Bat Cave
Saturday, October 31st
10am 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.

Mount Erie Walkabout
Saturday, November 21st
10am until 1pm

We will finish off our Fall season with an extra long adventure. Be sure to enjoy a big breakfast and bring a snack and water. Trail #247 is official and complete, making a circumnavigation of our Island Mountains possible. We will begin at the base of Sugarloaf/ Mount Erie on Ray Auld Drive.

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 or email us at info@friendsoftheacfl.org . Please understand that our hikes are for people only, we ask that you leave your pets at home. Hope to see you in the woods!

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.



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.

Ace of Hearts Creek
Friday, October 9th
10am until noon

Maple, willow, cottonwood, and mature alder bring abundant color to the season. This is one of the most deciduous areas of our forest, a real treat to explore in the fall. Expect a wide variety of mushrooms along the way. Meet at the Heart Lake parking lot.

Heart Lake Old Growth
Friday, November 13th
10am 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.

Whistle Lake
Friday, December 11th
10am 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.



RECORD TEMPS AND DROUGHT...

HOW'S THE ACFL?

By Ranger Dave



Dead Kinnikinnick and Douglas Fir in rocky bald habitat.

For those of you new to Anacortes, this summer must have seemed wonderful. Every day was like picture perfect sunny San Diego. We even had a fair number of warm evenings to sit outside in just a tee shirt and shorts. Normally, June is more like January and is often called “January” and summer officially starts on July 20th, but this year warm and dry days began in May and stayed that way until September. Record high temperatures and record drought conditions were abound. The City of Anacortes even put into place a voluntary water ban on yard watering and requested that folks do their best to conserve water. A fire ban on recreational campfires was in place in June. Fire danger ratings climbed every day as the lack of rainfall continued until the end of August, when a violent storm hit Anacortes bringing strong winds and rainfall that mimicked a typical mid-winter event. Huge trees tumbled and many trails were blocked for over a week. This was not a normal summer...

With these harsh conditions, how did the ACFL hold up? What suffered during the drought and what will be the long term effects, if any? Well, a stroll along most trails will give a casual observer a glimpse of flora that immediately suffered. One can see sapling evergreen trees like Douglas fir and Hemlock with all of their needles brown and falling off, a sure sign that the tree will not recover. Even some older trees turned completely brown and are headed south. Areas around Mt Erie and Sugarloaf have large patches of dried up Kinnikinnick, Salal, and sword fern. I have observed the Salal and sword fern dry up and recover in the past, but this is the first time I have noticed Kinnikinnick suffer from lack of rainfall. It will be interesting to see how it does next spring.

But what you don't see are the things that may be more of interest. The percent of water inside trees became extremely low during the summer. As lake water levels dropped, wetlands dried, and lack of rainfall persisted, the ability for trees to take in and hold water diminished. Water loving trees like willows, alders, and cottonwoods really suffered, and the big wind storm in August showed their brittle conditions. Most of the trees that came down or broke in half during the storm were these tree species. Also, toward the end of July and the beginning of August, deciduous trees began dropping their leaves in a response to conserving the little water they had. Trails like 27, 22, and 200 near Whistle Lake were covered in leaves making it look more like a late day in October instead of July.

Trees can take a lot of abuse. Seeing wildfire burn scars on 400-600 year old Douglas firs south of Heart Lake is a classic sign that trees can live through a lot of environmental changes. Smaller trees however have a more difficult time, and when drought conditions occur year after year, the stress eventually takes their toll on these trees. Trees did suffer this summer, and depending on how much rainfall occurs during the years to come will determine the fate of these trees. For me, I am hoping for wetter conditions for 2016. Never thought I'd say that!

City of Anacortes begins purchase of 40 acres adjacent to ACFL!



The City has entered into a purchase agreement with the owners of a 40-acre parcel of land flush with the south border of the Heart Lake area. This undeveloped acreage is known as the Van Buren/McLean property. The acquisition will ensure the continuation of exceptional wildlife and habitat value and function for the ACFL. Revenue from the City contract with Lakeside Industries (currently mining rock on leased ACFL land) has been used to initiate the purchase. The City will continue to make payments over the next year and a half as they pursue grants from conservation foundations to help offset the cost and allow for the possible purchase of more land adjacent to the ACFL in the future.

The Friends are accepting donations to go toward this purchase. If you wish to contribute, please make your check clearly designated for the acquisition fund. If you have questions please contact us at the Friends office, (360) 293-3725.

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
Aaron Ramussen 293-3018
Carolyn Moulton 588-1676

PARKS & FOREST LANDS

MANAGER

Jonn Lunsford 299-1953

CITY OF ANACORTES ELECTED OFFICIALS

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

NAME	E-MAIL	PHONE	TERM ENDS
Mayor Laurie Gere	coa.mayor@cityofanacortes.org	299-1950	12/31/17
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
P-4 Matt Miller	mattm@cityofanacortes.com	588-9070	12/31/17
P-5 John Archibald	john@cityofanacortes.com	395-5923	12/31/17
P-6 Liz Lovelett	lovelettl@cityofanacortes.com	588-8707	12/31/17
P7 Erica Pickett	ericap@cityofanacortes.org	293-6264	12/31/17

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

FRIENDS OF THE FOREST

OFFICERS

President Andy Stewart 299-9406
Vice President Monica Ochs 293-6003
Secretary Bill Dietrich 588-0118
Treasurer Lin Nichols 299-3826

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH DIRECTOR

Denise Crowe 293-3725

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

Jean Andrich 293-3725

WEBSITE ADDRESS

www.friendsoftheacfl.org

BOARD MEMBERS

Andy Stewart	299-9406	Jan. 2016	akccstewart@earthlink.net
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Lin Nichols	293-3826	Jan. 2016	lin.nichols@yahoo.com
Monica Ochs	293-6003	Jan. 2016	monica.ochs@gmail.com
Bill Dietrich	588-0118	Jan. 2016	williamdietrich@comcast.net
Denise Crowe	293-8426	Jan 2017	denise@friendsoftheacfl.org
Scott Gudmundsen	293-1550	Jan 2017	robertgudmundsen@shell.com
Charlie Collins	873-8873	Jan 2017	troutdental@yahoo.com
Ed Gastellum	293-7626	Jan 2017	ecgastel@wavecable.com

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.



FRIENDS OF THE ACFL
P.O. BOX 2213
ANACORTES, WA 98221

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Friends of the Forest Annual Benefit

Saturday, November 7 / 5:00 to 11:00 pm

Port Warehouse / 1st & Commercial / Anacortes

MUSIC	DINNER	SILENT AUCTION
Fidalgo Swing	Gere-a-Deli	LIVE AUCTION

TICKETS \$65/person \$500/table of 8 \$600/table of 10
Watermark Book Company, Friends of the Forest office / 293-3725
or online at www.friendsoftheforest.org

Cathy Schoenberg, Friends of the Forest, oil on canvas, 24" x 24" / Photo by How It Works

www.friendsoftheforest.org