



Friends of the Forest

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

Volume 30 • Issue 4 • Fall 2016



*You are cordially invited to attend the
Friends of the Forest Annual Benefit Event
November 5th at the Port Warehouse 5pm*

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.

We are starting at 5 pm to allow more time for the silent auction and ample time to socialize with your forest friends. Bob Vaux, our Master of Ceremonies/Auctioneer for the evening, will help create a relaxed and fun atmosphere.

The live auction will be short with only a few items and a direct giving opportunity through "Wave a Branch." We will also offer an easy check in /check out system again. We look forward to another wonderful event for all!

In addition to our featured art by Kris Ekstrand Molesworth, many other artists have donated work that will be presented for silent and live auction. Plentiful trips, items and services have also been donated.

Tickets are available through the Friends of the Forest Office, Watermark Book Company or online at: www.friendsoftheforest.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.

Highlights include; music by Fidalgo Swing, dinner by Ge-re-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.friendsoftheforest.org / info@friendsoftheforest.org / 360-293-3725

We hope to see you there!

Kris Ekstrand Molesworth, this year's Featured Artist lives in Bayview. She says, "My work is inexorably linked to where I live and what I have learned here." Before becoming an artist full time, Kris worked at North Cascades Institute and Museum of Northwest Art. We think "Away" is a representation of something very beautiful found in the Pacific Northwest.

FIRE ECOLOGY

By
Ranger Dave



With the recent wildfires in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands, one along trail 109 near Clyde Way on July 20th, one on Sugarloaf on August 1st, and a third along the east side of Little Cranberry Lake on August 26th, it's time to have a discussion on wildfires. The topic of wildfires can go in many different directions. We could talk about wildfire prevention, wildfire management, or wildfire ecology. For this discussion, I have chosen to discuss fire ecology, but first a brief background.

I have worked for many years in wildland fire management, fighting fires since 1981 with the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. I have also assisted in prescribed burning, where we go into an area and intentionally light the woods on fire, in a controlled manner under very specific guidelines, weather conditions, and objectives, to reduce wildfire dangers and to re-introduce wildfires in places where wildfires occur naturally from lightning storms. I have seen wildfire behavior in low and high deserts, mountain terrain, and rainforests. In each area, fires can occur naturally, and can benefit the diversity of the forest. But when fires are continuously suppressed, the natural buildup of fuels on the ground can become unbalanced, allowing for fires to be more intense and do more damage than good to the flora and fauna. With more and more homes being built up against forest lands, the need and desire for heavy fire suppression only compounds the problem.

Forests are not static entities that we can preserve without change. Natural plant succession, drought, and climate

change keeps a forest constantly changing. The drought in the ACFL that has occurred during the past two summer seasons has had a noticeable effect on the forest health and the potential for a wildland fire to occur. This potential can increase if weather patterns continue to be mild in the winter and dry during the summer months. Even though it seemed like summer weather this year was much cooler than normal, the dry days added up. Ground fuels (branches, duff, and dead trees) dried, and many trees began dropping their leaves and needles early to conserve water, which added more fuel to the ground.

The Little Cranberry Lake fire, which ended up being 18 acres, burned very hot consuming much of the ground fuels and live plants, occasionally burning up the sides of trees 10-20 feet high. The fire had potential to be much worse but luckily we had weather conditions on our side, very little winds, and a great response from local and State wildland firefighting crews and the use of two helicopters that dropped about 50,000 gallons of water on fire. If this fire started during a very windy day, the size and damage could have turned out much differently.

Wildland fires on Fidalgo Island are generally very small and very few. However, the State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has responded to 6 wildland fires on the island so far this year. The last big fire on the Island, about 20 acres, was at Sharpe Park in June of 2003 and it was believed to be started by fireworks. And prior to that, the 1980's was the last big fire on the island, according to Brian Adams, Skagit County Parks Director.

For now, the area burned by the Little Cranberry Lake fire is closed to all public use due to dangerous conditions, falling trees and rocks, holes, and damaged trails. Trails 102, 103, and 122 are closed indefinitely as these trails are heavily damaged and unsafe for travel. Kayakers and boaters should avoid the eastern shoreline of the lake due to falling rocks and possible trees. In the coming years, we will be able to see how the forest that has burned recovers. The thickness of bark on the Douglas Fir tree for example is designed by nature to protect the tree during a fire. Maybe we will see a bigger meadow with more wildflowers on the ridgetop! Fire can be a good thing for a forest, but it must be managed accordingly to benefit the forest and to make fire safe for residences and property. Dial 911 to report fires & campfires in the ACFL.



Greetings Forest Friends,



Denise Crowe

Autumn rain and wind has returned, but the summer of 2016 will be sure to live on in memory. Our second year of hard drought has brought noticeable mortality to shrubs and ferns as well as many young cedars and maple in the understory throughout the ACFL. Combined with a continuing rise in recreational activity, it is no wonder that we experienced multiple forest fires. We will continue working with City Staff on monitoring ecological recovery in the fire zones, helping to educate the public about what is happening in the woods, and participating in how to make our forest border with neighborhoods safe for residents while maintaining ecological integrity.

As sad as it is to say goodbye to particular places of beauty within the woods that are now altered forever, fire is a natural process and change is part of nature. The fires did what fires do, and the process of rejuvenation has already begun. The more dramatic and disturbing changes I have witnessed throughout the woods in recent years are not as natural, and are more damaging overall to this place we love. These are the little daily impacts from people who do not follow or respect basic forest rules that add up to large scale degradation through “death by a thousand cuts”. Every cigarette butt tossed, litter left, wander off trail, dog off leash, wildflower picked, wrong use on trail, illegal campfire or camping, corner cut for faster bike time, speed limit broken, dog crap left, dog crap left in plastic bag... they all hurt the woods and disrespect the spirit of our forest community. Please check yourself. We all love to feel free, yet there is real pleasure to be had in knowing we are doing what we can to take care of this precious place and ensuring good will with each other.

Thank you to all who came to our Library forest presentation on September 28th! I am looking forward to seeing many more of you at our big party in November. The third grade students of Anacortes are getting out on field trips and meeting their native plants in our Growing Wild program, you too can join a hike! Hope to see you in the woods.



Licorice fern return



Fall Calendar 2016



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 been serving the needs of the forest and Fidalgo Island residents since 1987. Our education program includes K-12 guided school field trips, Adult/Senior hikes, All ages hikes, Extra gentle hikes, fitness 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.

**For more info visit our website www.friendsoftheacfl.org or
inquire by email at info@friendsoftheacfl.org**

*These hikes focus on human and wildlife experience, so we ask that you please leave your pets at home.
Hope to see you in the woods!*

All Ages Hikes

Great for families and folks of all ages, these are hearty hikes led by our naturalist, Denise Crowe.

Sugarloaf Mountain
Saturday, October 8th
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.

Heart Lake Trail of Darkness
Saturday, October 29th
10am until about noon

(Our annual Bat Cave Hike of 25+ years is cancelled due to the fire, please join us for this alternate version!) Come to the woods for a natural spook time that will help transition us all to the dark season. Our annual exploration of nocturnal wildlife is fun for everyone! Costumes are welcome. Meet at the Heart Lake parking lot on the east side of the lake, just off of Heart Lake Road. (This hike is shorter than most and will include story time half way through, and treats at the end!)

Whistle Lake
Saturday, November 19th
10am until noon

Late Fall in the woods is a time of hushed beauty. Prepare yourself for the holiday season with a deep forest immersion. Meet at the Whistle Lake parking lot at the end of Whistle Lake Road.

Fast Paced Fitness Hike - For The Very Fit Only!

For people that want to move fast through the forest, and already know that they can! These offerings are led by Jean and some of our board members who love to get out in the woods and really cover some ground.

Whistle Lake Curly Q – a fitness odyssey
Saturday, November 12th
Time: 10am to 1:30pm
Distance: 8.2 miles

Join Jean, Monica, Lin and Scott on November 12th. Come walk in circles with the Friends of the Forest on our next fitness hike. This fast-paced 8 mile hike for the very fit will begin at the Heart Lake parking lot at 10 am. Hikers will experience the many ups and downs of the northwest section of the Whistle Lake forest lands as we walk in three connecting circles, on different trails, around and to Little Round Top. We will finish the hike by returning to Heart Lake about 1:30 pm. Bring water and a snack and meet at the Heart Lake parking lot.

Senior/Adult Hikes

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

Big Beaver Pond Loop Friday, October 14th 10am until noon

This gentle, just over one mile hike will lead us past three distinct wetlands and through two watersheds. You will come to know the qualities of a marsh, swamp, bog, and fen. We will explore the role of our resident beaver families in creating and sustaining this rich habitat within the ACFL. Enjoy this excellent birding opportunity. Meet at the end of 32nd St west off of D Ave.

Heart Lake Old Growth Friday, November 18th 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 9th 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.

Extra Gentle Hikes (New Offering!)

Each of these outings is a mile or less on gentle trails and will last about an hour.

Sugarloaf Mountain Old Growth Wednesday, October 19th 5pm until 6pm

Tucked in to the bottom of Sugarloaf lies a sweet trail through ancient trees. Meet at the base of Mount Erie on Ray Auld Drive.

Whistle Lake Madrona Point Wednesday, November 30th 9am until 10am

We will walk in to the Lake on a wide gravel road and enjoy the view! Meet at the Whistle Lake parking lot.



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.



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? Trail maps are now available for download on the City of Anacortes web site. Maps are available 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



FOREST ADVISORY BOARD		CITY OF ANACORTES ELECTED OFFICIALS			
<i>The City Forest Advisory Board meets every first Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at Fidalgo Center and is open to the public.</i>		<i>Meetings are 1st and 3rd Mondays, 7:00pm in Council Chambers. Study Sessions are 2nd and 4th Mondays, 7:00pm in Council Chambers.</i>			
<u>FOREST BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>PARKS & FOREST LANDS</u>	NAME	E-MAIL	PHONE	TERM ENDS
Sandra Starbuck 901-9179	<u>MANAGER</u>	Mayor Laurie Gere	coa.mayor@cityofanacortes.org	299-1950	12/31/17
Brian Wetcher 293-7624	Jonn Lunsford 299-1953	W1 Ryan Walters	www.ryanwalters.org	610-7770	12/31/19
Marty Laumbattus 293-7940		W2 Brad Adams	brada@cityofanacortes.org	293-3056	12/31/19
Carolyn Moulton 588-1676	ACFL RANGER	W3 Eric Johnson	www.anacorteseric.org	840-5415	12/31/19
Aaron Ramussen 293-3018	Dave Oicles 399-3970	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	lovelett@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

<u>OFFICERS</u>			<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>			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. 2018	
Vice President	Monica Ochs	293-6003	Lin Nichols	293-3826	Jan. 2018	
Secretary	Bill Dietrich	588-0118	Monica Ochs	293-6003	Jan. 2018	
Treasurer	Lin Nichols	299-3826	Bill Dietrich	588-0118	Jan. 2018	
<u>EDUCATION AND OUTREACH DIRECTOR</u>			Scott Gudmundsen	293-1550	Jan. 2017	
Denise Crowe	293-3725		Charlie Collins	873-8873	Jan. 2017	
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR</u>			Ed Gastellum	293-7626	Jan. 2017	
Jean Andrich	293-3725		Steve Williams	293-0830	Jan. 2018	
<u>WEBSITE ADDRESS</u>						
www.friendsoftheacfl.org						

Thanks to this year's Friends of the Forest
Benefit Event Sponsors!
Sponsorships are still arriving!

McMullen & Ochs, Attorney at Law
Shell Puget Sound Refinery
Tesoro
Mountain View Dental Center
Samish Indian Nation

Barrett Financial Ltd, Community Caring Project
Chandler's Square Retirement Community,
in memory of John Tursi
Derek Damon, Orthodontics
Emerald Marine Carpentry
Heritage Bank
Island Import Garage
North Sound Oral and Facial Surgery, P.S.
Port of Anacortes
Sebo's Henery Hardware
Skagit Runners
Skagit Ultra Runners

A'Town Bistro • Bayside Dental Care • Dakota Creek Industries Inc.
Fidalgo Animal Medical Center • Strandberg Construction Inc.



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!



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

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*"Away" by Kris Ekstrand Molesworth courtesy of Smith and Vallee Gallery
Mixed media and charcoal, 51" x 35" framed. Photography by ACME Creative.*

or online at www.friendssoftheacfl.org

Watermark Book Company, Friends of the Forest office / 293-3725

TICKETS \$65/person \$500/table of 8 \$600/table of 10

Fidalgo Swing

Gere-a-Deli

MUSIC

DINNER

SILENT AUCTION
LIVE AUCTION

Port Warehouse / 1st Commercial / Anacortes

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

Friends of the Forest Annual Benefit

