



# Friends of the Forest

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

Volume 35 • Issue 3 • Summer 2022

## Bye Bye, Birdie

By Beck Pittman, Forest Educator

Dear Friends of the Forest members and community,

It is with a bittersweet heart that I announce that August will be my last month working at Friends of the Forest. My farewell is by no means a final goodbye, though. I hope to continue to learn and grow in these forestlands even when I am no longer an official staff member. In these last few years, I've been honored with the privilege of working on behalf of the ACFL. The Forest Lands have offered such a positive influence in my life, facilitating educational experiences and allowing me to learn alongside our community about the amazing web of life preserved in this pocket of Anacortes. In the time to come, I am looking forward to volunteering with our monitoring teams, participating in community events, and of course attending the November fundraiser, which I haven't been to in person yet!

I am moving on to direct a fully-outdoor preschool at The Attic Learning Community, an independent school in Woodinville. I will be approaching my new role with a scientific lens, and I hope to share back to our community about my experiences in my new "laboratory." I am curious to observe how an approach rooted in constructivism in the forum of the outdoors influences children's development, and I am excited to work and learn with students over a longer-term scale to see this development occur.

Constructivism is the idea that humans are intrinsically motivated to learn about what interests them, and are the builders of their own knowledge through observation, pattern-building, and sense-making. Adhering to this idea implores teachers to be students of their students; allows the student to take charge of their own education, exploring and learning from things that are important to them; and encourages the perspective that as whole human beings, children are to be respected as powerful community members. The parallels between constructivist educational practices and watching wildlife are not lost on me—as generally, both are about watching from out of the way, learning from what you watch, and anticipating what might come next.

In the ACFL, I am intent to see what comes next. I have so much gratitude for the community who set out to preserve and protect this forest. Because of those actions, people look to this example and in it see a future for this world that is so struggling to maintain balance. Whatever the community deems as the next big step for the ACFL, the anxiety of an uncertain future is tempered by the solidity of the forest. A forest is a place for us to share, and if we do right by it, it will always be a place that shares itself with us.

Thank you to everyone who has taught me something about this landscape. Thank you to the sun, water, air, and earth. Love, Beck



Beck in her natural habitat!  
Friends of the Forest and Skagit Land Trust  
Family Field Trip, November 2021.  
Photo by Hannah Katz.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Complete details on the “Upcoming Events” page on our website at [www.friendsoftheacfl.org/upcomingactivities](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org/upcomingactivities). Or simply scan the QR code on the right to get there!

We have begun using a registration system so that we can contact you if the hike needs to be cancelled or rescheduled. Walk-ins are always welcome but we do appreciate if you’d fill out the RSVP located on each event page.



**Aug 6**  
**Aug 13**  
(Sat/Sat)  
9:30 am  
-11:00 am

**Small Wonders** - Easy - A Avenue Trailhead - Choose which day you’d like to participate! We’ll take a nature walk, hear a story, and use our senses to observe nature. Small Wonders helps children develop a sense of comfort while in the outdoors and helps caregivers observe and nurture their child’s curiosity. (Event is for toddlers up to 3 years and their caregivers).

**Aug 10**  
(Wednesday)  
9:00 am  
-12:00 pm

**Ethnobotany** - Intermediate - A Avenue Trailhead - It’s that time of year when berries galore are decorating the trails of the ACFL! The ways in which the land provides what humans need to survive abounds—from food, medicine, tools, transportation, and shelter. Join this hike to learn more about how plants can be used— we’ll search for berries (and look but not eat—there’s no foraging in the ACFL!) and learn more about the uses of trees, shrubs, and groundcover in the forest.

**Aug 12**  
(Friday)  
10:00 am  
-1:00 pm

**Community Science Wetlands Monitoring** - Easy - We’ll be meeting on the second Friday of each month during 2022 to monitor wetlands around Little Cranberry Lake and Big Beaver Pond. Wear weather-proof clothes and bring your curiosity! Location changes each time and will be emailed to registered participants prior to the hike.

**Aug 27**  
(Saturday)  
8:00 am  
-12:00 pm

**The Three Little Hills** - Advanced - Heart Lake Main Parking lot - On this hike around Little Round Top, Sugar Cube, and a final summit to Sugar Loaf, we’ll veer up hills and back down again, with beautiful views of trees and sky. We’ll rest occasionally for water and snack breaks and general facts and Q&A from the group about the plants and critters around us, but mostly we’ll be moving! Wear sturdy shoes and bring poles if you need.

Are you receiving our bi-monthly e-newsletter? It’s chock full of Upcoming Events, interesting stories, volunteer opportunities, and more! E-newsletter recipients are the first to know when registration goes live for our most in-demand kids’ programs, and members get first dibs on registration--don’t miss out!

Email [info@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:info@friendsoftheacfl.org) if you’re not sure you’re subscribed and we’ll sign you up!

# Business Memberships: Help show your support!

We are incredibly fortunate to be a part of a community that values so highly the Anacortes Community Forest Lands and our work in service of them. Local businesses are an integral part of this community and have long sponsored our annual benefit dinner and auction.

In gratitude, we are excited to offer a new Friends of the Forest Business Membership as a way for you to support our work and receive recognition year-round, not just during our benefit event. By becoming a Business Member, you demonstrate your support

for our beautiful forest lands. Six membership levels are available, each with its own variety of benefits, starting at only \$250. Your business will still be featured at our benefit event as before but there are a range of new benefits depending on your contribution level, with all business members receiving a window cling to show their commitment to supporting the Friends of the ACFL (pictured).

To learn more, please visit our website, [www.friendsoftheacfl.org](http://www.friendsoftheacfl.org) or contact Executive Director Asa Deane at [asa@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:asa@friendsoftheacfl.org).



## 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 a financial contribution to our organization! You may contact our office at 360-293-3725 to discuss any of these options.

### **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 are welcome to make this in honor or in memory of a loved one or special person.

### **3** 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 sizable donations.

### **4** Planned Giving

One of the best ways you can continue supporting the work of the Friends is through a legacy gift. If you are making estate plans, please consider including our organization.

# Welcome to our TWO new staff members!



Ellie holding a bag of animal excrement (!)  
Read the rest of Ellie's article to find out which  
fascinating animal it's from!

## Meet Ellie!

By Ellie Kravets, Community Programs Coordinator

In a planned shift, Beck's Forest Educator position has been split in two. Ellie has recently joined us as our new Community Programs Coordinator!

Ellie was born and raised in New Orleans, where she first developed a passion for environmental education during the five years she spent as a volunteer/intern at the Audubon Zoo. She left the zoo's volunteer program with over 2000 hours logged presenting (and sometimes writing!) shows for the zoo's wildlife theater, taking care of the zoo's non-releasable birds of prey, and helping mentor the zoo's next generation of youth volunteers as they learned how to teach visitors about the biological wonders of Southeast Louisiana. Ellie's years at the zoo continue to influence her work today, reinforcing her belief that informal, community-based science learning can change lives for the better. (It certainly has done so for Ellie!)

In 2013, Ellie began work on her undergraduate degree in biology and marine science at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill. While in North Carolina, Ellie worked at the UNC Herbarium, where she led projects focused on... (continued on page 8)

## Meet Hannah!

By Hannah Katz, Youth Education Coordinator

In a planned shift, Beck's Forest Educator position has been split in two. Hannah will be our new Youth Education Coordinator, beginning in August. Hannah comes to Friends of the Forest after completing an AmeriCorps term with Skagit Land Trust where she focused on community engagement. During her time at SLT, Hannah worked to increase community engagement through implementing educational events, running communications, and leading stewardship work parties. You may have even seen her co-leading a few events with Friends of the Forest. She is excited to continue chasing her passion of fostering community and inspiration in the natural world through her new role as the Youth Education Coordinator!

Prior to serving with Skagit Land Trust, Hannah completed a summer-long AmeriCorps program at The DREAM Program, an organization focused on providing education and summer programming to children in low income communities in Vermont. While with DREAM, Hannah worked to start a community garden and focused on providing local environmental and academically relevant education to the community. (continued on page 9)



Hannah and her partner Ryan at Oyster Dome

# Summer Party on Saturday, July 30th!

**JOIN US FOR SOME SUMMER FUN AND SUPPORT THE ACFL!**

**MUSIC BY THE ENTHUSIASTS**

**FRIENDS OF THE FOREST**

**FACE PAINTING KIDS' MUSIC**

*Summer Party*

**SATURDAY, JULY 30**

**11:00-3:00**

**HEART OF ANACORTES**

**1014 4TH STREET**

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**11:00 DOORS OPEN, BAR'S OPEN!**

**12:00-1:00 MUSIC FOR KIDS FROM BUGDOWN PALACE**  
(FEATURING BECK AND ASA FROM FRIENDS OF THE FOREST)

**1:00-3:00 MUSIC FOR ALL AGES FROM THE ENTHUSIASTS**

**ALL DAY LONG: SNACKS AND DRINKS FOR SALE, FACE PAINTING, FOREST EDUCATION KIDS ACTIVITIES, AND MORE!**

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**DRINKS PROVIDED BY ANACORTES BREWERY**

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT OUR FOREST EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS. FRIENDS OF THE FOREST IS A 501 (C)(3) NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION.



**FRIENDS OF THE FOREST**

Entrance to the event is free, but we welcome donations—all will benefit our Forest Education and Outreach programs. All proceeds from drink sales will benefit Friends of the Forest.

We'll have snacks, drinks, games, music, and more! Be one of the first to own our NEW Friends of the Forest gear (including shirts for kids)!

Questions? Email [info@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:info@friendsoftheacfl.org). Hope to see you there!

# Anacortes Schools Foundation Scholarship Recipients

Friends of the Forest Scholarships are awarded annually to students who have enthusiasm for our natural environment, and who support Friends of the Forest's mission and dedication to the preservation of Anacortes Community Forest Lands through education, outreach, and stewardship. Preference is given to students who plan to study areas related to the outdoors, environment, conservation, or nature. Two students from the Class of 2022 and one alumna received these awards.



Pictured, L-R: Caitlin Brar, Friends Executive Director Asa Deane, Mia McCutcheon.

## **Mia McCutcheon**

A lover of nature and the environment, Mia McCutcheon hopes to incorporate both into her studies when she attends Hawaii Pacific University this fall. Mia was a member of Future Business Leaders of America, the Art Club, and played on the tennis and track and field teams.

## **Caitlin Brar**

A 6th grade trip to Mountain School left an indelible mark on Caitlin Brar. This is where she was exposed to the impacts of climate change and learned about the importance of caring and protecting the forest ecosystem. Teacher Victor Garcia remarked that her dedication to the environment went far beyond the school day to far flung parts of the country, as one of AHS's most stalwart volunteers on environmentally-related community service projects.

## **Vincent Jackson**

Vince is a rising junior at Western Washington University. He is studying urban planning.

# Procession of the Species in Anacortes



*Photos by Zack Conklin Wight.*



Procession of the Species is a celebration of the web of life that originally began in Olympia and has since spread world-wide, with many towns and cities inspired to host their own. This year, Friends of the Forest joined with other local community groups to plan and celebrate a Procession of the Species. We culminated our first season of gathering, scheming, and dreaming about creating art that expresses love for nature with a procession in the July 4th parade.

Local artists Luuk Honey, Andy Stewart (Friends Board Member), and Clarity Miller led art workshops in the fun space in the back of Johnny Picasso's. Community members made artistic costumes that depict species or other ecosystem elements. The Anacortes group hopes to engage dancers and musicians to join for future events.

Typically, Procession of the Species happens around or on Earth Day, but the Anacortes group is hoping to hold its own on (or near) the Summer Solstice in 2023. There are just three rules: no words, no live animals, no motorized vehicles (except of course, for animals or vehicles that aid a person with mobility or other needs). These parameters guide the creation of costumes, music, and dance into an expressive, artistic realm.

Get involved! Check out the group's Instagram, [@potsanacortes](#), or visit [www.potsanacortes.org](#).

Save the Date!  
First Weekend in November  
Friends of the Forest Benefit Auction  
Details in early fall!

# Welcome New Staff!

## Meet Ellie!

...daylighting historical collections for the modern scientific community, including a collection of 100+ type specimens as well as a large, mostly untouched collection from the 1840s-1920s.

Throughout her undergraduate career, Ellie continued to find internships that would allow her to return to her home state: one summer she worked as a costume-rearer for endangered Mississippi sandhill cranes, where she learned to walk-the-walk and talk-the-talk (squawk-the-squawk?) of a mother sandhill crane. The two chicks she helped raise are now in the wild on their refuge outside of Biloxi, MS, helping to ensure the future survival of their species. She also worked as a field technician for a botany project in Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, and spent a summer dodging alligators and crawling through palmetto thickets in order to give the National Park Service valuable information about typically inaccessible areas of the park.

After completing her undergraduate degree, Ellie spent a year working as a naturalist in Indiana Dunes National Park, helping to interpret the diverse biota of the dunes ecosystem to students (and their adults!) in the greater Chicago region. She particularly enjoyed supporting students through their own independent research, harnessing the power of individual curiosity in order to deepen students' understanding of the world around them.

For all the time she's spent in other parts of the country, Ellie's family is rooted in the PNW and Washington had always been one of her childhood playgrounds. In the summer of 2018, she decided to move to the state full-time and accepted her first in a series of positions with the Port Townsend Marine Science Center. Ellie spent just shy of two and half years in Port Townsend, wearing too many hats to count. Here's just a small snapshot of the delightfully weird places that job led her:

- In full rain gear, late at night, dangling on a barnacle-covered rock in order to assess the health of a tiny, half buried sea star
- Teaching students about plankton diversity through an optical microscope on a replica historic longboat
- Explaining the science behind concretion fossils to landowners while others responded to the stranding of a 40 foot gray whale just down the beach
- Participating in the necropsy of said gray whale, a few days later (if you guessed the photo was from a whale, you'd be correct)!
- Meticulously creating 2D representations of each bone of a transient orca that stranded near Dungeness Spit in 2002 for a COVID-friendly community art project
- Fighting the rising tide (and a windstorm) to retrieve a cage of mussels, whose bodies were filled with valuable information on toxins in the Salish Sea

During her time in Port Townsend, Ellie fell in love with the rich landscape of community-centered science learning uniquely characteristic of the Salish Sea region. In 2020, she began work toward a M.A. in Museology (Museum Studies) at the University of Washington in order to delve more deeply into the impact that informal education can have on students and communities. While at UW, Ellie held internships that examined how informal STEM learning institutions can utilize Universal Design to ensure that their programming is accessible to all individuals, regardless of ability. Through her focus on museum evaluation, Ellie developed and implemented evaluation projects designed to explore how the messages and intent of informal learning experiences are being translated by the audiences that attend them.

Ellie is thrilled to have found a place here in Anacortes with the Friends of the ACFL. During her first weeks, she's been blown away by the richness of the forestlands and can't wait to get her feet wet learning more about this diverse community in her backyard! She is so excited to support community members in continuing to steward the ACFL, and join in the legacy that makes this particular patch of forest so special.

Find Ellie out exploring the island - looking for slime molds on the trails or shore crabs on the beach - or gardening on her patio with her cat, Chester. She can't wait to see you out there!



## (continued from page 4)

### Meet Hannah!

...In August 2021 Hannah completed her term and drove across the country with her mom to start her next adventure in the PNW! She currently lives with her two college roommates who she moved out with and her partner.

Hannah's professional and academic work has focused primarily on community engagement and experiential, community relevant education across the world. She graduated from Hamilton College in New York in May of 2021 with a B.A. in Environmental Studies. While in school Hannah chased independent studies and non-traditional classroom education opportunities including working with farms, nature preserves, activism groups, and a youth climate program. Her legacy includes co-founding Hamilton College's first volunteer-run maple sugaring program, which focused on engaging students with their environment during COVID-19, and co-founding a Sunrise Movement Hub in the Adirondacks.

During college Hannah also had the opportunity to work with The Wild Center's Youth Climate Program for several years where she focused on organizing youth conferences to focus on climate change. She continues to serve on their youth advisory board. She also worked as a sustainability coordinator on campus, wrote outdoor-themed pieces for the school website, and volunteered as an outline club trip leader. She spent two semesters off campus, one in the Adirondacks focusing on community-building, and one in Australia through the School of International Training's Sustainability and Environmental Action program.

Hannah grew up in upstate New York in a small town outside of Albany. Some of her earliest memories include being dragged out on evening walks by her parents, despite her 6-year-old objections. Now, she is happy that they didn't give up and credits her family's outdoors adventures, including summer vacations to national parks, for her drive to work towards building sustainable communities.

On weekends or after work you can find her exploring by bike, foot, tent or boat as she continues to discover the PNW. One of her favorite day trips is to bike onto Guemes Island and spend the day pedaling around with a stop at the Guemes Island Store for a lemon bar or muffin.

#### Fun Facts:

- Completed 90 mile canoe race, 2 triathlons, and several nordic ski races
- Sports Teams Joined in College: Marathon canoe racing, biathlon, Nordic skiing, tennis, cycling, track and field, Scottish country dancing
- Perfect Summer Day: Canoeing camping with a fire and smores in the evening
- Siblings: 1 sister getting her PhD in paleoclimatology at University of Michigan, and 1 dog who lives with her mom

Are you following us on all three of our Social Media channels?

[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/anacortes.friendsoftheforest.acfl)

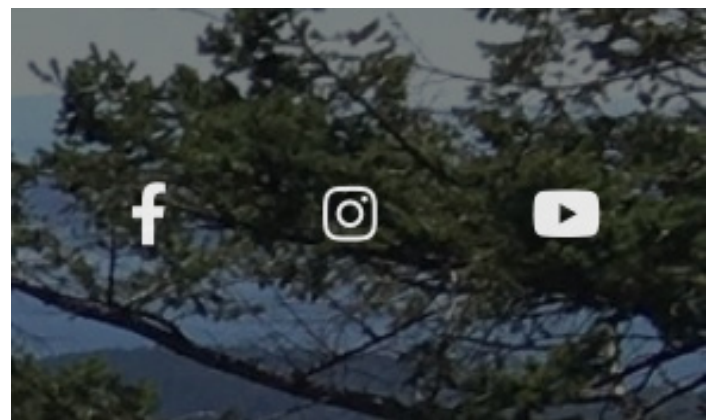
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These icons above are located on the top right corner of our website. Simply click on each to go to the appropriate page, and Like, Follow, and Subscribe!

# “Dear Hoo” A quarterly column to answer all of your burning ACFL questions!

Email your questions to Hoo the Owl, Friends of the Forest’s Wise Advice Columnist! [info@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:info@friendsoftheacfl.org)

**Dear Hoo,**  
**I’ve been noticing yellowish foam in some ACFL creeks lately. What’s going on here? Are the creeks polluted?**  
**–Noah**

Dear Noah,  
The foam is natural, if you can believe it! Decaying organic matter like twigs and leaves break down and release compounds called surfactants. The word surfactant was coined in 1950 and comes from “surface-active agent.” Surfactants operate on the surface of a liquid and when mixed in moving water, create foam. The molecular reasons for this are fascinating, and highly worth an internet search. We can see foam in the creeks all throughout the year, and in late spring/early summer it is especially noticeable for a few reasons: springtime buds and petals have fallen into creeks and are breaking down; as temperature rises, the rate of decomposition is increased; and as the weather changes, wind “whips up” the surface of the water. We also expect foamy creeks in the fall, when leaf matter accumulates and decomposes.

However—phosphates can also cause foamy water, if the creek was fed water from farmlands where phosphate fertilizers were used, for example. Excess phosphate in the ecosystem can increase algae



blooms, which then deplete oxygen levels, leaving less dissolved oxygen in the water for aquatic organisms (another reason to eat organically farmed or home grown food!).

Foam caused by phosphate is often plain white and occurs in localized areas. But foam that is yellowish, tan, or brown and accumulates in large amounts and over large areas, is likely to be natural. Plus, the water in the ACFL watersheds is likely to be low in phosphates, since the land does not butt up against industrial farmlands, and water can naturally filter through the protected forest soils and wetlands.

## Friends of the Forest

Friends of the Forest Board Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm. We are currently meeting via Zoom. Meetings are open to the public- please email Director Asa Deane for more information on how to join.

### How to reach us:

#### Email

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

#### Office

611 R. Ave. Anacortes, WA

#### Office Phone

360-293-3725

#### Mail

PO Box 2213 Anacortes, WA 98221

#### Web

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

## Forest Advisory Board

**Bob Vaux** | Parks and Recreation  
Asst. Director | 360-299-1918

## Board Members

**Charlie Collins** | President | Jan. 2023

**Rob Skelton** | Secretary | Jan. 2023

**Steve Williams** | Vice President | Jan. 2022

**Lin Nichols** | Treasurer | Jan. 2022

**Andy Stewart** | President Emeritus | Jan. 2022

**Lynne Jordan** | Board Member | Jan. 2023

**Andrea Petrich** | Board Member | Jan. 2024

**Wyndham Jackson** | Board Member | Jan. 2024

**board@friendsoftheacfl.org 360-293-3725**

\*Emails sent to the board are received directly by the Executive Committee & are not seen by staff.

## Staff

**Asa Deane** | Executive Director | [asa@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:asa@friendsoftheacfl.org)

**Beck Pittman** | Forest Educator | [beck@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:beck@friendsoftheacfl.org)

**Ashleigh Ellsworth-Keller** | Outreach and Development  
Coordinator | [ashleigh@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:ashleigh@friendsoftheacfl.org)

**Ellie Kravets** | Community Programs Coordinator |  
[ellie@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:ellie@friendsoftheacfl.org)

**Hannah Katz** | Youth Education Coordinator |  
[hannah@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:hannah@friendsoftheacfl.org)



Left: Members and Volunteer Trail Ambassadors Jim Wells and Rae Kozloff, representing Friends of the Forest at the Anacortes Public Library for this year's Summer Reading Program, "Oceans of Possibilities!" (photo by Board Member Andrea Petrich).



Friends of  
the Forest



Top: Members Tim and Jane at Procession of the Species (photo by Zack Conklin Wight).

Right: Columbia Lily, Trail 205, Whistle Lake. (photo by Ashleigh Ellsworth-Keller).

Have any photos to share? Submit to our photo contest at [info@friendsoftheacfl.org](mailto:info@friendsoftheacfl.org) through August 1st! More info on our website homepage.





Friends of the ACFL  
 P.O. Box 2213  
 Anacortes, WA 98221

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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.

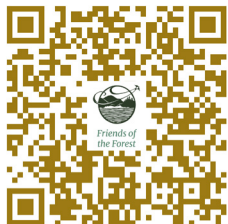
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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



<--Save a stamp-renew by scanning this QR code!

Other amount \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Interest

\_\_\_\_\_ Topics for general meetings or newsletter

Please mail memberships/contributions to: Friends of the ACFL, PO Box 2213, Anacortes WA 98221 or visit us at 611 R Avenue, Anacortes WA. Annual dues should be renewed each January.

Thank you to all the friends who have renewed their dues! Keeping your dues current with the Friends of the Forest is one of the best ways to Think Globally and Act Locally. Here on Fidalgo Island, the ACFL needs Friends to ensure its preservation. Our Education program depends on your support.

Thank you!