



Friends of the Forest

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

Volume 35 • Issue 1 • Winter 2022

A Message from the Executive Director

By Asa Deane

As we move forward into another new year and look back on the last, we choose to focus on the things that helped us through the difficulties we've faced. We choose not to dwell on the ever-shifting landscape we've had to jumble through, but on the constants, those reliable touchstones in our lives that we go to when we need support.

If you are reading this right now, it's because you have experienced the joy of one of these touchstones: the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. Through all of this turmoil, the ACFL consistently remained open and available for all of us to escape to, to explore, to remind us of our connection to the planet and each other, despite what may be going on in the rest of the world.

The ACFL...reminds us of our connection to the planet and each other, despite what might be going on in the rest of the world.

So as we enter 2022, we look forward to returning the favor to the ACFL: to ensure that it is appreciated and respected by its many users, old and new alike (and there are quite a few new users)! Our many goals this year involve not only restarting our classic programs to full capacity, but expanding the opportunities and avenues with how we connect people to the forest lands:

- We have a full year of community hikes planned for the first time since 2019, and we've diversified the topics and challenge levels so that everyone can join a hike that interests them.
- Not only are we continuing our summer day camp, Forest Discovery, but we're expanding the number of sessions and adding a week geared specifically towards the children of Skagit Valley field workers (called 'Campo al Bosque,' or 'Field to Forest').
- While we will continue to work with schools to provide quality environmental education to Kindergarten, 3rd, and 7th grade students, we will also have our own after-school forest exploration program throughout the entire school year.
- We're expanding our volunteer programs to include more forest work parties and an even greater Trail Ambassador program in the summer months to educate all trail users.
- And we're starting two new community science programs: one through our 'Naturalist Club' program focusing on water quality testing, and one in partnership with Anacortes High School and Transition Fidalgo as an internship for high school students to gain hands-on scientific experience collecting data and writing reports.



Big Beaver Pond is one of the many beautiful places in the ACFL we can enjoy year-round.

We are full of gratitude for all the forest has provided to the community and feel so fortunate to be able to return the favor. Here's to looking forward; to working together to protect and preserve our precious ACFL, for this year and many more to come.

UPCOMING EVENTS (please see complete details on website)

Feb 11

(Friday)
10:00 am
-12:00 pm

ACFL Naturalist Club: Community 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! Let us know you'll be joining us by signing up on-line; a link is posted at the start of the month on our "Upcoming Events" page.

Feb 12

(Saturday)
10:00 am
-12:00 pm

Family Nature Walk - Easy - Whistle Lake Parking lot - Join a gentle family hike with Forest Educator Beck, who will have family-friendly nature activities, games, and stories to share. Come prepared for the weather. We'll follow the kids' pace and let them guide the nature inquiry.

Feb 14

(Monday)
3:30 pm
-5:30 pm

"I'm Lichen You!" Community Hike - Intermediate - 29th Street Access off of D Avenue- Lichens are not just plants—they are made up of fungus, algae and/or cyanobacteria. Living as composite organisms, their ancient adaptation of co-habitation has stood the test of time, and today we find beautiful lichens in all shapes, sizes, and colors, living everywhere from hanging in trees, plastered on bark, on rocks, or popping up from the ground. We'll head to a destination where we can spend time identifying all the species around us—if we can make it there without getting distracted by all the wonderful lichen on the way!

Feb 23

(Wednesday)
1:00 pm
-4:00 pm

"Magnificent Mosses" Community Hike - Intermediate - Ray Auld Drive parking lot - Join guest naturalist Elizabeth Drozda-Freeman to learn about the many magnificent mosses of the ACFL. Mosses are everywhere, so we may only make it a few "steps" (that's a moss pun, everyone) before we find a treasure trove of diverse species, but we'll try to get to our exploration destination!

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.

Reanne Hemingway-Douglass



Reanne Hemingway Douglass and her husband Don Douglass were life-long lovers of the out-of-doors, firm believers in the importance of preserving nature and wilderness for posterity, and devotees of supporting their local community. And so much the better when they could achieve these goals almost in their own back yard! No surprise, then, that my mother donated for many years to Friends of the Forest. To friends and relatives who made donations in her memory, she would have been deeply touched. (from Reanne's son, Sean)

Ann Dursch



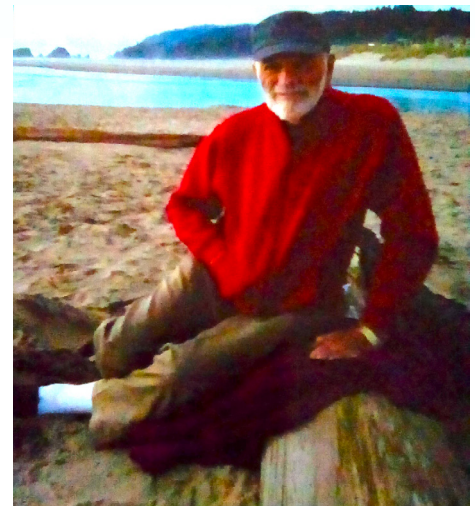
Ann Dursch lived in Anacortes for 71 years, sailing around the San Juans with her husband, Bob. She supported her community in numerous ways, and was particularly involved with local environmental causes, including serving as a founding member of the Skagit Land Trust. Ann was well known for her love of nature and her desire for others to enjoy it with her and was an environmentalist well before that was popular. In her honor, please don't take short cuts when on the trail, but do stop to look at the wildflowers! (from Ann's family)

Bharat Gael



Bharat Timothy "BT" Gael was devoted to the ACFL, and its trails and woods brought him boundless peace and joy. Bharat was fortunate enough to live with direct access to ACFL trails and would do daily walks in the woods, along with his wife, Mieke, enjoying the bountiful ferns and the hoots of the owls at dusk. Their favorite trail, hiked innumerable times, is Trail 306. The family continue these walks and are joined by Bharat's beloved spirit in the beautiful ACFL woods. (from Bharat's daughter, Lindsey)

Trevor Kyle



Trevor liked the fact that a large percentage of our forest land is preserved and it was important to him that it continued to be protected.

(from Trevor's wife, Delberta)

Trevor donated vintage knives from his collection to our annual Benefit auction, and his support continues today through a generous bequeathment from his estate. We are humbled by this gift and are pleased to be able to continue to preserve the ACFL with his help.

2021 Friends of the Forest Members

We are so grateful for this community of Friends! Thank you to those of you who have recently joined us as members, as well as those who have supported our mission since Day One. Our donors are the true heroes responsible for the work that is accomplished in the community and in the ACFL; it would not be possible without you! We appreciate your contribution and look forward to a new year of education, outreach, and stewardship. Annual membership dues are due in January. If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2022, please consider making a gift today.

Evelyn & Gary Adams
Kathryn Alexandra
Sandra Anderson
Bret & Jean Andrich
Mike and Denise Antrim
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Barbara Ann Atterberry
Emily Babcock
Rebecca Bachman
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Karen & Mark Backman
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Harry Dursch
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Chelsea Fletcher
Debra Forman
Michele Fremont & Jerome McCool
Julia Frisbie
Didi & Steve Funk
Bharat and Mieke Gael
Ed & Carolyn Gastellum
Kit Gerwels
Dennis & Christy Giddings
Susana Gilbertson
Kelly Gordon

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We make every effort to acknowledge all our donors whose donations were dated 1/1/21-12/31/21, but if your name has been inadvertently omitted, please contact us at (360) 293-3725 or info@friendsoftheacfl.org and we will include you in the next newsletter. Thank you!

“Dear Hoo” A new 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



Dear Hoo,
Do river otters spend time in the forests? Something poked its head out of Little Cranberry Lake, and I wondered if it was a beaver or otter!

Sincerely,
Was an Otter in the Water?

Yes, North American river otters do spend time in the ACFL! In addition to the rivers their name suggests, these semi-aquatic mammals in the weasel family reside in an array of habitats including beaver ponds and lakes. They are mostly crepuscular (most active at dawn and dusk) but in the winter they become more diurnal (active during the day). River otters are excellent

hunters and primarily eat fish and shellfish, but they also will feed on amphibians and some small mammals like mice and squirrels. One way to determine their diet is to examine their scat (carefully, as some may carry parasites). Fish scales are easily spotted in this sample (pictured above) from Big Beaver Pond in the ACFL.

River otters have some amazing adaptations that allow them to be slick both on land and in the water—a warm coat of water-repellent fur, tiny ears and a neck the same width as their head reduce underwater drag, and they can stay underwater for up to 8 minutes. They can run up to 15mph on land and can go even faster sliding! Human activity like land clearing, pollution, roadkill and fishing net accidents, and illegal trapping pose threats to the North American river otter. Luckily, the ACFL is preserved not just for humans but for all wildlife, including those wild otter wonders... Wow!

Friends of the Forest

Friends of the Forest Board Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm. We are temporarily 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

Office

611 R. Ave. Anacortes, WA

Office Phone

360-293-3725

Mail

PO Box 2213 Anacortes, WA 98221

Web

www.friendsoftheacfl.org

Forest Advisory Board

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

Board Members

Charlie Collins | President | Jan. 2023

Lin Nichols | Treasurer | Jan. 2022

Lynne Jordan | Secretary | Jan. 2023

Andy Stewart | President Emeritus | Jan.

Steve Williams | Board Member | Jan. 2022

Rob Skelton | 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 | 360-399-6184

Beck Pittman | Forest Educator | 971-248-6618

Ashleigh Ellsworth-Keller | Outreach and
Development Coordinator | 928-607-2961

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

We are so thankful for everyone who “showed up” for our annual (virtual) Benefit event and silent auction this past November! We welcomed a dynamic and fascinating guest speaker, photographer and writer Amy Gulick, who spoke about her work in Alaska and the indelible connection between the salmon and the trees in the Tongass Rain Forest.

Our online auction was a great success, raising \$40,000 because of your generosity. These funds go directly towards the many education and outreach programs we are offering in 2022, and for the perpetual preservation of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands.

Through the many ups and downs of late, we are grateful for the support of this community and from the individuals in it, who understand the value of the ACFL on Fidalgo Island, a rare jewel in our very own backyard. It’s the responsibility of all of us to protect it, and we’re glad to be able to do this work alongside you.

If you haven’t renewed your membership for 2022, you can clip the form on the back page of this newsletter, or visit our website at www.friendsoftheacfl.org/membershipanddonations. Thank you, and we’ll see you in the forest soon!



Featured art, “Summer Memories,” by Cynthia Richardson

Thank you to all of our sponsors!



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MARK GARDNER



McMullen & Ochs
Attorney at Law



Rob Skelton, Jessica Notaro, Joanne Day

**Feb
23rd**
(Tuesday)

Save the Date: Annual Membership Meeting

via Zoom - register at www.friendsoftheacfl.org starting in February

5:30 pm
to
7:00 pm

Members and non-members alike are invited to attend our Annual Membership Meeting. Board elections and a brief review of the Annual Report will kick things off, followed by a presentation by a special guest speaker!



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

Other _____

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!