



Great Peninsula Conservancy

Winter 2015

Protecting our lands and waters for generations to come



REI and GPC Partner to Improve Trails – Page 3

Giants in the Woods

A walk in the woods was meant to release the angst that enveloped us after a devastating Seahawks overtime loss the day before. It was partly sunny when we left for the trailhead but a light rain started before we got to the Big Bend of Hood Canal. Our destination was the Skokomish River Trail in Olympic National Forest.

I had forgotten how big the trees are. Giant hemlock, fir and cedar with massive trunks stood passively along the river trail. Their branches blocked the steady rain. Impulsively, I reached out and pressed my palm against the rough bark. Surely this sentinel had stood for five, six, seven or eight centuries. Stepping back, my eyes were drawn up the deeply furrowed trunk. Huge raindrops—like silver bullets—shot down from a branch high overhead. One found its mark on my forehead.

With daily worries long forgotten, my mind raced instead with possibilities. Will the 200-year old trees now protected in GPC's Grovers

Creek Preserve some day reach the size of these sentinels along the Skokomish? Will GPC find the means to add another 100 acres to the preserve so more trees reach these majestic proportions? Will we be successful in protecting remnant forests on Carpenter Creek and Filucy Bay so they too become a place of quiet wonder?

It is dreams like this that inspire us to do amazing things. You have an opportunity now to make a difference. Ten of GPC's most generous donors have pledged to contribute \$100,000 to Great Peninsula Conservancy, if others match their gifts. To reach this goal, we need to raise \$70,000 before

December 31. Will you join me in making a generous donation now to help meet our Great Peninsula Challenge?

Imagine your grandchildren and their grandchildren taking a walk in the woods among giants here on the peninsula. You can make it happen. Please make a donation today!

Sandra Staples-Bortner
Executive Director



Great Peninsula Conservancy

Protecting forever the natural habitats, rural landscapes, and open spaces of the Great Peninsula.

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REI and GPC Partner to Improve Trails

What a great turnout for both of our October REI - GPC Stewardship Days! Thanks to the hard work of 35 fabulous volunteers, a quarter mile of popular trail was re-routed to protect wetlands and habitat for countless creatures in Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park. The new route provides a firm foundation for several trail running and cycling events and creates a new entryway to over 65 miles of public trail in North Kitsap's Port Gamble forest.

More than 50 volunteers attended our Stewardship Day in South Kitsap. With guidance from Kitsap County staff and Banner Forest Stewards, volunteers repaired more than 240 feet of wetland trail crossing and relocated a second trail in Banner Forest Heritage Park. Volunteers from REI's Silverdale and Tacoma stores, Boy Scout Troop 1525, the Poulsbo Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and GPC members enjoyed a BBQ and went home with a REI "Life Outside" t-shirt and water bottle.

With support from REI, GPC is helping to care for and create access to outdoor recreation spaces. REI partners with nonprofits that actively engage community volunteers in caring for public lands by lending its staff and helping to recruit volunteers for environmental stewardship projects. Warm

thanks to REI and all of our stewardship partners: North Kitsap Trails Association, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance – West Sound, Kitsap County Parks, Kitsap Audubon Society, and Backcountry Horsemen of Washington – Peninsula Chapter.



REI store manager Nada Healy works to re-route a trail at Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park.

Photo Credit: Mary Zabinski



Many hands make light work! Trail volunteers spread 20 yards of gravel to repair a wetland trail crossing in Banner Forest Heritage Park.

Photo Credit: Mary Zabinski

Exploring Sehmel Homestead Park

When Henry Sehmel emigrated from Germany in the 1880s, he likely never imagined that his homesteaded land in Gig Harbor would become a “diamond” of a park in the South Sound. PenMet Park’s Sehmel Homestead Park boasts some of the best baseball and soccer fields in the region. But most of this park—76 acres—features natural areas, including meadows, ponds, forests and trails, that are protected forever by Great Peninsula Conservancy.

“This park is a partnership between GPC and PenMet

Parks,” noted PenMet Parks Executive Director Terry Lee as he welcomed GPC friends and members to a guided tour of the park in late September.

Sehmel Homestead Park is the story of four generations who lived on the land for over 110 years, as well as the story of neighbors, community groups and government agencies who came together to protect this land forever. Many people joined with Great Peninsula Conservancy to raise money to purchase the property and turn it into a park for both active and passive



GPC steward Melissa Sherwood guides walkers through t

Conservancy Circle News

Meet Wanda Butler

She climbed Mt. Pilchuk at age 5, helped along by her father prodding from behind and holding onto her dog’s tail. At age 90, she still hikes weekly with the Monday Hikers, choosing less strenuous routes and often lagging behind the group, but still getting out in nature.

Wanda Butler turned her interest in exercise into a career as a health and physical education teacher, spending 20 years at Marcus Whitman Jr. High in Port Orchard. With summers off, she spent 14 seasons as a camp counselor, remembering fondly one three-day rowing adventure around Vashon Island.

With her love of the outdoors, Wanda was a City of Bremerton Parks Commissioner

for more than a decade. She became a member of Kitsap Land Trust (GPC’s predecessor) in 1995 and joined GPC’s Conservancy Circle in 2011, with her first annual gift of \$1,000. She probably holds the record for the most memorial gifts made to GPC at 11 to date. “I love the idea of saving all this land and the trees,” exclaimed Wanda. “If we don’t do it who will? Once it’s gone it’s gone.”



Wanda Butler draws children’s attention to a bird on a recent walk in Sehmel Homestead Park.

Photo Credit: Liz Satterthwaite



the wooded trails of Sehmel Homestead Park.

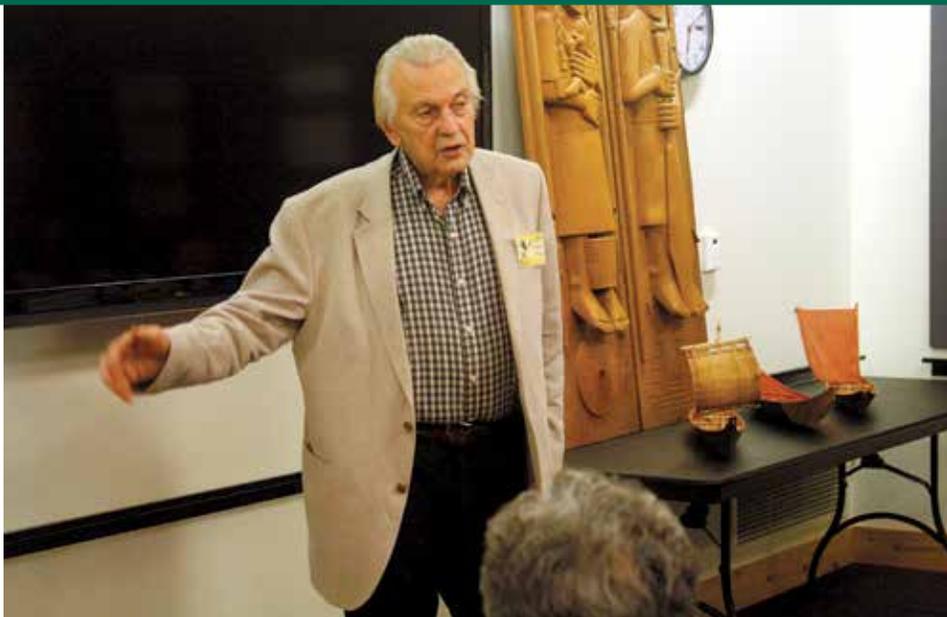
Photo Credit: Mary Zabinski

recreation. We succeeded! Today kids and adults of all abilities go to Sehmel to play sports, watch birds, learn about trees, walk their dog, or take care of a trail.

GPC members and friends began our fall exploration of the park with a guided tour of the Master Gardeners' demonstration garden and heritage garden. We soon turned onto a forested trail, then skirted the meadow, crossed board-walked wetlands, continued on to the former cow pasture and around the pond, with guides Melissa Sherwood and Jane Ostericher pointing out

plants and animals along the way.

Great Peninsula Conservancy is teaming up with area partners to encourage more people to discover the natural side of Sehmel Homestead Park. The trails are open to the public every day. Master Gardeners and Tahoma Audubon Society offer free gardening talks and bird walks. And stewardship events, like GPC's November 7 trail work party, are always looking for volunteers. Come explore and join your neighbors in taking care of this special place you helped protect!



Conservancy Reception

Thanks to members like you, GPC protects forests, farms, shorelines and streams for today, tomorrow and forever! In celebration, GPC's Conservancy Circle and Legacy Society members gathered for an evening at the Suquamish Museum. Artists, and fellow Conservancy Circle members, Betty and Duane Pasco (above) spoke about their Northwest Coast Native Style Art and their passion for land conservation. Guests met the Pascos, enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and toured the beautiful museum.



Photo Credits: Mary Zabinski

A Gift for the Ages



Photo Credit: Mary Zabinski

Gail Bronson (center) is recognized for her Legacy Society gift during GPC's Conservancy Reception at the Suquamish Museum by President Art Schick and Sandra Staples-Bortner.

Have you ever wished you could make a larger donation to Great Peninsula Conservancy? If worries about saving money for your everyday living expenses or for your retirement have caused you to give less than you would like, perhaps you should consider making a legacy gift to Great Peninsula Conservancy.

Legacy gifts are pledged now but GPC receives the gift after your death. The most common example is a **bequest** made to Great Peninsula Conservancy in your will. Generally this is either a fixed amount or a percentage of your estate.

Another popular method is to name Great Peninsula Conservancy as a beneficiary of your **life insurance** or **retirement account**. This can be done easily just by inserting GPC's name on the appropriate form provided by your insurance company or investment firm. Savvy donors have learned that naming GPC as a beneficiary of a retirement account may be a good option for tax reasons.

Donors with large assets and who want to be

sure a loved one is taken care of before their gift is made to Great Peninsula Conservancy may find a **charitable remainder trust** to be the best option. This can be created now or in your will. You and/or a loved one receive income from the trust during your lives and GPC receives the money remaining in the trust after all other beneficiaries pass away.

Legacy donations have played a significant role in GPC's conservation successes. These special gifts have enabled GPC to add staff at critical times, upgrade technology, and, most importantly, conserve more land!

A legacy donation to Great Peninsula Conservancy provides assurance your contribution will help conserve special places close to home, forever. (If you don't do

this, who will?) GPC's relatively small size offers another advantage. Your gift, of any amount, will stand out among a cherished few and really make a difference.

In all cases, GPC advises you to consult with an attorney and tax advisor to select the legacy gift that works best for you. You become a member of GPC's Legacy Society as soon as your pledge/gift is made known to GPC. Legacy Society members are recognized in our annual report and are invited to a special event each year (see page 5).

If you have made a legacy gift to GPC or are considering one, please contact Executive Director Sandra Staples-Bortner (sandra@greatpeninsula.org or 360-373-3500). Legacy donations to GPC truly are a gift for the ages!

Memorial Gifts

(September 1 through October 15, 2015)

In memory of Dorris McGuire

Chuck

Here's to You, Grandpa!

Memories of spring and summer days at her family cabin on the shore of Hood Canal have been on Karen Wylde's mind. Since the early 1900s when her great grandparents Samuel and Ellen Wylde bought the property at Nellita, family camping trips to the canal have been a family tradition.

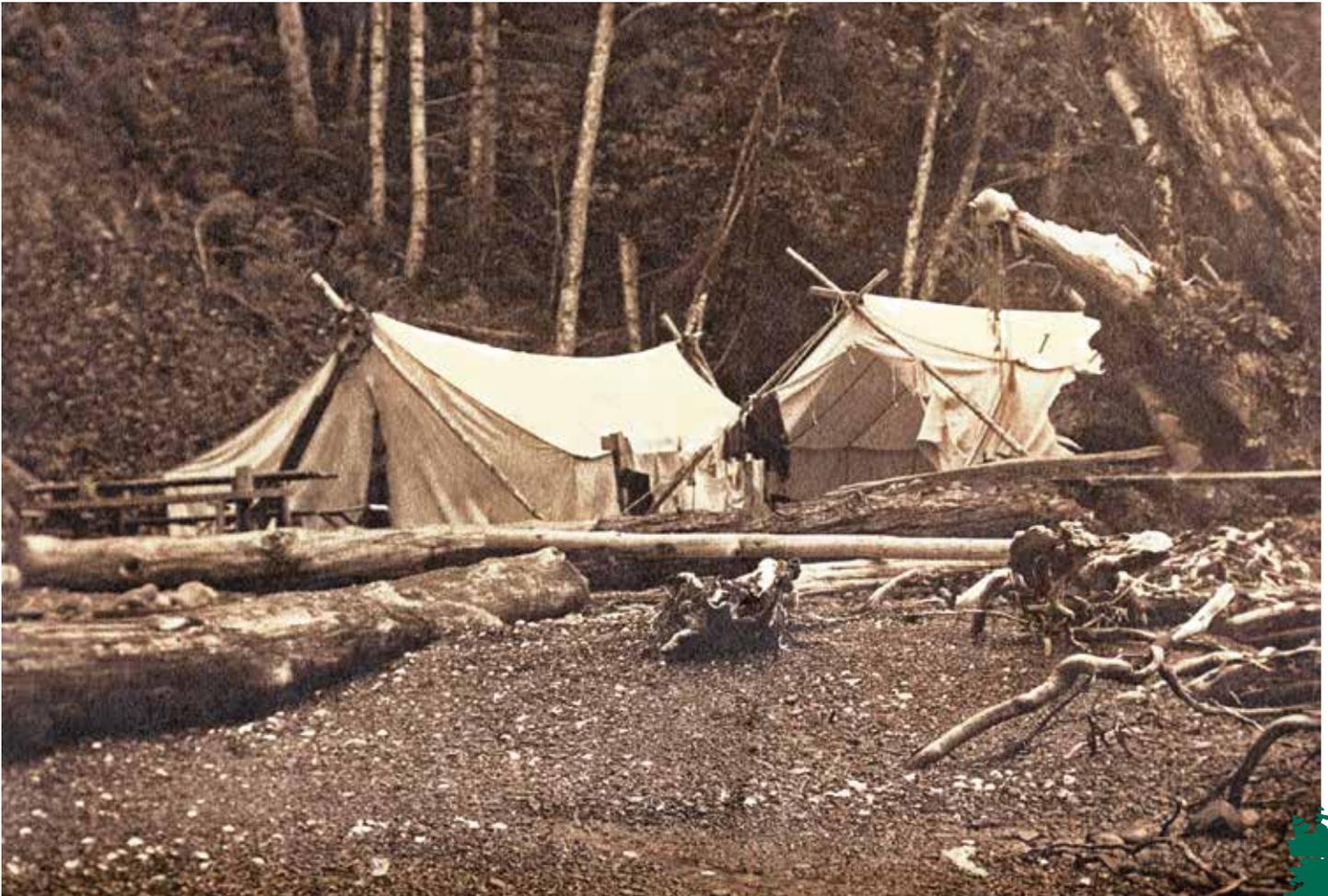
In the days of the Mosquito Fleet, visitors could take a boat from Seattle to Nellita, a tiny settlement with a hotel and dock, but no roads. "I remember hearing my grandfather reminisce about traveling by boat, although it was said that the first trip my family took to Nellita from Seattle was by canoe," remembered Karen.

"It was my grandfather who taught me his love of this area, from its forested cliffs to its clear waters," she continued. "I will never forget the wild rhodies in bloom, the spring that ran behind our cabin

providing us with fresh water, the brilliance of the phosphorus at night as my dad, grandfather and I paddled canoes, and celebrating our return to a bounty of clams and oysters."

While the family cabin was sold in the 1990s, memories endure. Now in her late fifties, Karen received a substantial family inheritance a few years ago. An avid kayaker, she knew she wanted some of the money to go toward conserving land on Hood Canal. To that end, she recently named Great Peninsula Conservancy as a beneficiary of a charitable remainder trust created in her will.

"The vision of GPC is one I share passionately," enthused Karen. In making her gift, Karen wants to honor her family and especially her grandfather, Norman Yelverton Wylde Sr. As she recently put it, "Here's to you, Grandpa!"



Contributed Photo

Camp Wylde at Nellita on Hood Canal, 1918, 8:45 a.m.



Great Peninsula Conservancy

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Great Peninsula Conservancy is an accredited land trust.

YOU can help us rise to the CHALLENGE

Goal
\$100,000

\$30,000 Donated!
Deadline: December 31

It's an ideal time to make your gift to Great Peninsula Conservancy. Our 2015 challenge donors will contribute \$1 to GPC for every \$1 we raise up to \$100,000—doubling the value of every gift! But, your help is needed now. We have only a few weeks left to raise the remaining \$70,000. Your contribution by Dec. 31 will help protect our salmon streams and evergreen forests for generations to come. Together we can rise to the challenge!

*Please mail your gift to Great Peninsula Conservancy,
423 Pacific Avenue, Suite 401, Bremerton, WA 98337.*