



Great Peninsula Conservancy

Fall 2014

Protecting our lands and waters for generations to come



Photo Credit: Mary Zabinski

Indianola Waterfront Preserve Stewardship Day – page 4

Close Encounters

I hope you have found time during this splendid summer to have a close encounter with some of the wonders of nature. My own special moment came on a boating vacation in Southeast Alaska in a waterway brimming with humpback whales. As the whales gorged themselves under water on herring and other sea life, they made their presence known above water in a variety of ways.

Most often we saw spouts followed by the graceful curve of a back just breaking the water's surface. Frequently, we saw a bi-lobed tail fluke lifted high out of the water and then slipping from sight as the whale dove deep. Occasionally, an elongated dorsal flipper slowly waved up and down, up and down. Several times what we thought was a floating log turned out to be a mostly-submerged whale slumbering at the surface. On rare occasions, we saw a full body leap clear of the water and fall back with a gigantic splash and thunderous boom.

Imagine this scene spread from horizon to horizon across a calm inland sea. As we watched quietly at anchor under a cloudy sky, the steady sound of whales exhaling transformed in my mind to the sound of the ocean itself breathing. Listening

carefully, I was surprised to hear a subtle but distinct background chorus of whale song. Who knew that whale song could be heard above water? Magical!

As summer turns to fall, the determined return of salmon to our streams soon will entice us outdoors for a glimpse of Puget Sound's own special magic. As you enjoy your own experiences in nature, please think about the difference your generous donation will make to Great Peninsula Conservancy. With your help, GPC is on track to conserve an amazing 1,120 acres in the next two years spanning three counties and a range of habitats including forest, shoreline,



Humpback whale in Stephens Passage, SE Alaska.

Photo Credit: Brad Bortner

freshwater wetland, and a family farm. Imagine the close encounters these landscapes will provide to awe us, our children, and grandchildren with the beauty and magic of nature. Your gift makes it all happen.

Sandra Staples-Bortner
Executive Director

Great Peninsula Challenge 2014
Goal: \$97,500



Great Peninsula Conservancy

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

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Conservancy Circle

Cowling Creek Preserve Tour



Photo Credit: Don Willott

Conservancy Circle members led by GPC board member Dick D'Archangel explore Cowling Creek Forest Preserve.

Thirty members of GPC's Conservancy Circle enjoyed an August outing on GPC's Cowling Creek Forest Preserve in north Kitsap County. The morning began with a project briefing and yummy cookies, fruit and lemonade, before the group headed out on a walking tour through the shady forest.

This small preserve on the western shore of Miller Bay began as the vision of Virginia Cowling. Virginia and her husband Bill moved to Miller Bay in 1967 and built their home-in-the-woods. Their property included two perennial streams which, beginning in 1977, were used as a primitive hatchery by the Suquamish Tribe in a highly successful effort to restore chum salmon to East Kitsap streams. After Bill passed away in 1982, Virginia enlisted her neighbors in protecting the stream and salmon, and the idea of creating a preserve was born.

Cowling Creek Forest Preserve began modestly with a 2 ½ acre purchase by Virginia Cowling in 1994 and slowly expanded to today's 28 acres.

Over more than a decade, Virginia Cowling bought and donated a total of 10 acres to Great Peninsula Conservancy. Meanwhile, Friends of Miller Bay raised money to buy an additional 18 acres. With the idea of someday creating an education center, Virginia donated her home and made a bargain sale of her 13-acre home site to the Suquamish Tribe, retaining the right to live there throughout her lifetime. As part of the bargain sale agreement, the tribe promised to maintain the property in its natural state and continue operation of the salmon hatchery.

Virginia Cowling passed away in 2008 at the age of 92, leaving most of her assets to Great Peninsula Conservancy. Her bequest of over \$200,000 has become the lead gift in GPC's current campaign to conserve almost 400 acres on Grovers Creek at the north end of Miller Bay. Amazingly, twenty years since her first land donation, Virginia Cowling is still inspiring neighbors to conserve streams, salmon and Miller Bay.

Join GPC's Conservancy Circle today!

Your annual gift of \$1,000 or more makes you a member of GPC's Conservancy Circle and places you at the center of GPC's conservation program. Conservancy Circle members enjoy exclusive benefits including special project tours and our annual Conservancy Tea. If \$1,000 sounds daunting, you might consider a pledge payable in quarterly or monthly installments.

Thank you!



Stewardship with help from our friends!



Boy Scout power moves gravel to new trail.

What a great turnout for our GPC-REI Indianola Waterfront Preserve Stewardship Day on September 13! Under GPC's leadership, more than 50 volunteers, community members, and Silverdale REI employees removed Scotch broom and blackberry from the restored Indianola estuary, grubbed and graveled 140 feet of new trail, and constructed 118 feet of boardwalk. Forty-two members of Boy Scout Troop 1506 from Tracyton provided the muscle behind these accomplishments. Special thanks to Dave Haley, Dick D'Archangel, Jerry Engel, Casper Lane, Joe Lubischer, Rick McNicholas, Erik Pedersen, Gary Welch, and Jay Zischke who devoted many hours in advance of the big day prepping the site for our volunteers.

Indianola Waterfront Preserve is part of an 88-acre preserve owned by Kitsap County and protected by a conservation easement held by Great Peninsula Conservancy. The Preserve is a site on the Kitsap Peninsula Water Trail, part of a designated National Water Trail.



Invasive weeds were removed from the restored estuary.

For the second year, GPC received a \$10,000 grant from REI to care for and create access to outdoor recreation spaces like the Indianola Waterfront Preserve and the new Port Gamble Shoreline Park. 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.

Thanks to all the volunteers, REI and our other partners – Kitsap County Parks, Suquamish Tribe, and Pyramid Materials – for making it all happen. Our many volunteers all received REI water bottles and lunch provided by REI and the Indianola Country Store. Great job everybody!

Photos by Mary Zabinski

Mark Your Calendar

GPC-REI Port Gamble Shoreline Park Stewardship Day – Saturday, Nov 1, 9 am to 2 pm. Kitsap County's newest park needs your help! Here's a chance to roll up your sleeves and spend a day with other rock star volunteers on Kitsap County's Port Gamble Shoreline Park. We'll be removing invasive plants and replanting with red cedar saplings. Come enjoy the shoreline and the views! Bring your gloves, shovels, clippers, and sturdy shoes. Stay for some great snacks and go home with a Get Dirty T-shirt courtesy of REI. RSVP: kate@greatpeninsula.org or (360) 373-3500.



Volunteers young and old construct a boardwalk across the estuary.

Dorothy Lind Receives GPC's New Conservation Award

GPC presented our first annual Great Peninsula Conservation Award during our Spring Dinner on May 8, 2014. This year's award was sponsored by Ueland Foundation and the first recipient is Dorothy Lind.

Dorothy Lind has vivid memories of visiting her Aunt Dot and Uncle Gerry Petersen's farm in Silverdale, Washington when she was young. "When I was a little kid living in Pittsburgh, it was quite an experience to visit the farm. It was absolutely 'the back of beyond' in those days, nothing like it is today," she recalls. She remembers Aunt Dot feeding the calves from a nipple bucket. They'd all crowd around and she'd tell them to behave. Dorothy also remembers Uncle Gerry and his farmhand Ed milking the cows, and her amazement that the cows could find their way back to their stalls on their own.

Gerald Petersen died in September 2009 at age 94, naming his niece Dorothy Lind as personal representative of his estate. Since then, Dorothy has steadfastly sought to realize her Uncle Gerry's wish to keep the farm a farm forever. Dorothy has eagerly led farm tours at GPC-hosted Petersen Farm Fall Fairs; patiently and diligently negotiated the terms of a land preservation agreement (known as a conservation easement) with GPC; listened to and weighed community and family concerns about the farm; and provided generous financial terms for GPC's purchase of a conservation easement on the farm.

Dorothy was born in Seattle but grew up in Pittsburgh and later Corvallis. She taught elementary school and raised a son and daughter in Regina, Saskatchewan with her husband Ron. They retired to Blind Bay, British Columbia in 2007 and, sadly, Ron died in 2009. Dorothy enjoys the outdoors and is an active leader in Girl Guides – Canada's version of Girl Scouts. Last year she celebrated turning 65 by doing the 'Beaver Freezer' a sprint triathlon in Oregon – her first!

Dot and Gerry Petersen got married and bought the farm the year Dorothy was born. As Dorothy recalls, "They always said they remembered how old I was because I was the same age as the farm! It made the place seem pretty special to me." Dorothy's efforts to save Petersen Farm have made her pretty special to farm lovers all over the Great Peninsula.



Dorothy Lind (left) receives first Great Peninsula Conservation Award for her conservation of Petersen Farm from Executive Director Sandra Staples-Bortner.



Conservation land donors honored by GPC's Executive Director Sandra Staples-Bortner (far left) and President Sidnie Shaffer (far right): Ron Seman (second from left) for the donation, with his brothers, of 35 acres on Martha John Creek, Port Gamble Bay and Melissa Haumerson (second from right) for donation of 46 acres of forested shoreline on Filcuy Bay, Key Peninsula.



290 people attended GPC's Spring Dinner in May, raising over \$70,000 for conservation.

Celebrating their Conservation Legacies

Although GPC lost four of our founding members and a conservation land donor this year their legacy lives on. All provided the foundational support on which GPC has grown.

Mary Ellen McCaffree (1918 – 2014) served on the board of Kitsap Land Trust and was instrumental in the founding of Great Peninsula Conservancy, serving as treasurer and board member. Mary Ellen served eight years in WA State Legislature, as director of WA State Department of Revenue, and as chief of staff to US Senator Slade Gorton. Upon her return from Washington DC and move to Hansville, Mary Ellen brought her long experience in advocacy, politics, and government to her land trust work and helped build a strong foundation for GPC.



Photo Credit: McCaffree family

Mary Kenney (1939 – 2014) and Vernon Young (1935 – 2014) were founding members of Peninsula Heritage Land Trust and Vernon served on Great Peninsula Conservancy's first Board. Both were outspoken advocates for protection of Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula forests, estuaries and open spaces. Mary and Vern were instrumental in GPC's successful fundraising effort for the acquisition of Sehmel Homestead Park. They both went on to participate in the park planning effort, with Mary advocating for habitat protection and passive use and Vernon for active recreation. Mary helped acquire and became the steward of Lay Wildrose Preserve. Vernon lent his energies to the acquisition of Wollochet Estuary Park and to volunteer ivy removal projects on Wollochet Bay.



Photo Credit: Sherrie Kilborn

Mary Kenney at Sehmel Homestead Park.

While taking different approaches to their conservation endeavors, these two very dedicated individuals achieved a remarkable conservation legacy.

Barbara Hunt (1927 – 2014) and her husband, Bill, were founding members of Hood Canal Land Trust. Barbara served on HCLT's Board, helped found Great Peninsula Conservancy, and served on GPC's first board. She was instrumental in the acquisition of Johnson South Sound Preserve on Key Peninsula and in protecting the Phyllis Ellis Forest in Gig Harbor with a conservation easement. Her love of Hood Canal was legendary, making her the perfect steward for GPC's Klingel Wildlife Refuge. From her home in Belfair, Barbara's enthusiasm and community connections provided much needed support for GPC projects and community events on Hood Canal.



Photo Credit: Hunt family

Barbara Hunt and son David kayaking on Hood Canal.

Nancy Lind (1929 – 2014) with her husband Bob, donated a conservation easement over their 80 acre Lind Family Farm in Home, WA. In a lifetime devoted to the care and preservation of land on the Key Peninsula, she worked with volunteers to build Volunteer Park, was instrumental in preserving Rocky Creek Conservation Area and Devil's Head, and was a Key Peninsula Parks and Recreation District commissioner. Her sons now own and steward the Lind Family Farm, carrying on her vision of protecting its fields, forests, and wetlands.

Great Peninsula Conservancy would not be the organization it is today without our dedicated and inspirational founders. They will be missed, but their legacy lives on in the lands they helped to protect in perpetuity.

Memorial Gifts

(February 16 - September 15, 2014)

In memory of Rosa Carter
Lee Carter

In memory of Lloyd Clevon
Mike Bowling
Rita Eklund

In memory of Bob Deitz
Natalie E. Bryson

In memory of Violet Grace
Wanda Butler

In memory of Mary Kenney
Charles & Gail Bronson
Margaret & John Fife
Ken & Sherrie Kilborn
Tom Miskovsky & Marilyn Simpson
Dolly Monaghan
Mark & Inez Ritchey
Leo & Joan Sheporaitis
Frank Sommerfield
Su Tunney & Jamie DePew
Sumiho & Yasuko Wada

In memory of Melba Knudson
Ken & Sherrie Kilborn

In memory of Nancy Lind
Su Tunney & Jamie DePew

In memory of Mary Ellen McCaffree
John & Catherine Ahl
Gary & Marilyn Cunningham
Connie Thumma Derman
Dan & Nancy Evans
Jay & Susan Fredericksen
Raymond W. Haman
Sandra Jaroslaw
Joan Phillips & Ric Jones
James Shipton
Sylvia Skratek
Thrivent Financial employees

In memory of Don Wilhite
BJ Wilhite

Gifts to Honor

In honor of David and Katherine De Bruyn
Margaret Duncan

In honor of Michael Orr
Denise Brown

In honor of Phyllis Summers
Kay Angkico

Meet GPC's New Board Members



Margaret 'Kit' Ellis,

Gig Harbor

(Term expires: 2017)

Kit grew up on the Gig Harbor Peninsula and recently moved back to the forestland where she was raised. The Conservation Easement on her family's land was signed in 1990

to protect the integrity of this 180-acre forest. Kit spent her professional career at a community college teaching chemistry and helping colleagues throughout the state learn to use computers in their teaching. She has been involved with Girl Scout Camp St. Albans, located between Allyn and Belfair, for many years. Kit coordinates the camp's instructional native plant garden and was recently appointed a camp trustee. She is an active participant in Pierce County ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) and hopes that all the training will never be needed for a major disaster. Tennis, bird watching, and travel are her other passions.

Debbie Engel,

Indianola

(Term expires: 2017)

Debbie's passion for the out of doors began as a child while exploring the creeks near her Midwest home. Debbie has a Human Services degree from Western Washington

University and worked for 20 years as Education and Conservation Manager for Kitsap Public Utility District. Her work for the PUD gave her the opportunity to promote stewardship of the



environment. She led field trips to teach children and adults about plants, animals and insects that live in our local streams and wetlands. In 2008, Debbie received Environmental Educator of the Year Award from the Washington State Association of Water and Sewer Districts. Working with customers to conserve water was another professional responsibility for Debbie. She served on the board of Partnership for Water Conservation from 2007-2012, serving as Chair in 2012. Debbie raised her three children in Indianola where she lives on five acres with her husband, Jerry. Since her recent retirement, she has more time to pursue activities in the community. She enjoys gardening, boating and hiking in the beautiful Pacific Northwest.

Andrea L. Spencer,

Indianola

(Term expires: 2017)

Andrea is Community Development Director for the City of Bremerton. She has an undergraduate degree in Landscape

Architecture and a Master's of Regional Planning, both from Washington State University. Andrea has been with the City of Bremerton since 2005, and during her tenure she has led her team to develop several subarea plans that have been recognized locally by Governor Gregoire and nationally by the American Planning Association. Her work includes development of plans for the City Comprehensive Plan, Shoreline Master Program, Critical Areas, and Zoning. She is also responsible for all development review and permitting. Andrea was recognized in 2010 as one of Kitsap's 40-Under-Forty. She served on the Leadership Kitsap Board from 2008-2014 (and is a past president) and is an active Bremerton Rotary member (and former board member). Andrea and her husband Mike live in Indianola with their young daughter and very friendly golden retriever who all enjoy spending time in the outdoors.





Great Peninsula Conservancy

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GPC on Facebook

Great Peninsula Conservancy can be found on Facebook! We regularly post photos from the field, project updates, and news links on Facebook, so sign up and log in if you would like to receive up-to-date conservation news from the Great Peninsula. The best way to find us is to go to www.greatpeninsula.org and follow the Facebook link. See you there!



KITSAP SALMON TOURS

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 8

Bring family and friends to celebrate the return of salmon at two FREE events on Chico Creek – visit one or both locations:

- *Chico Salmon Viewing Park, Chico Way at Golf Club Hill Road, Bremerton*
- *Mountaineers Foundation Rhododendron Preserve, 3153 Seabeck Hwy, Bremerton*

Starting at 10 am salmon experts will give short presentations at Chico Salmon Viewing Park on the hour and at 10 am, 11:30 am and 1 pm on the Rhododendron Preserve in the Chico Creek watershed.

Sponsored by Great Peninsula Conservancy, Clean Water Kitsap, WSU Kitsap Extension, WA Sea Grant, The Mountaineers, Mountaineers Foundation, and the Suquamish Tribe.