



Lower Nehalem Community Trust

beading the necklace of people and place

JANUARY 2012

Message from the Chair

*“This very night,
while you lie quietly in your bed,
open your eyes.
Now, look out your window!
For even at this yawning hour,
so many of your friends
are working to keep the world magical.”*

—Cooper Edens
from Caretakers of Wonder, 1980

It’s 2012, and this year your land trust will celebrate its 10th Birthday. We are very busy looking forward to how we can continue to do our work and still be here to celebrate our 20th. To this end, we have included a member/donor communication survey to determine your preferences with regard to the type and frequency of communications from us. A few moments of your time now could save us all considerable time and other valuable resources in the future.

We are also pleased to report that we will be working with consultants and representatives of the national Land Trust Alliance during the next six months to create an Organizational Development Plan to guide our work over the next several years. Our hope is that this set of recommended and prioritized activities will help us with grant applications and ensure our long-term organizational sustainability.

That we begin this new year on a sound financial footing, with a strong stewardship program in place is due in no small part to the generosity of you, our members, donors and volunteers. Plus you can’t overestimate the value of quality bookkeeping when you work in the non-profit world. We are ever grateful for the contributions that all of you make, so that continuing to acquire and steward land can be our future.

Because looking forward can get a bit hamsterish at times, I would like to pause and reflect a little, beyond this past year’s many firsts: trust calendar, stewardship intern, record-setting donations to the food bank and incredible greenhouse improvements. Beyond even the acquisitions of the North Edge properties to the very early months of the formation of this Trust. When seven of your friends and neighbors got together, each with a vision of what forming this trust might mean for the future of the community. It won’t surprise you that those seven folks lacked complete uniformity in that regard, but nevertheless there was plenty of overlap. I can’t speak for the others, but it has become something more wonderful than I could have guessed.

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Judy Sorrel, Dan Spotskey, Fred Lackaff, Vivi Tallman and Judy Coleman summit Foley Peak on a guided expedition they purchased at the Trust’s Living Locally experience auction/fundraiser. Dan and Abby Spotskey were the guides who led the group to the rocky peak which is such a visual presence in the Nehalem Valley.

PHOTO BY ABBY SPOTSKY

SAVE THESE DATES

“Pie Day/Night,” Saturday, January 28, 2012

Our most delicious and fun fundraiser of the year!

The Trust’s fourth annual “Pie Day/Night” fundraising event will feature a sweet and savory pie auction and all-you-can eat pie feast. Bring your friends and have some fun as you support the ongoing work of LNCT and our event partner, Food Roots. Our star-studded auction team of radio personality Peter Newman and Megan (Liz) Cole bring humor and delight to the evening. The event begins at 7:00 pm at the Nehalem Bay United Methodist Church, 36050 10th Street in Nehalem. Admission is \$5 which includes auction and pie feast. Plan to bring some extra \$\$ and go home with a home-made pie from the auction. Call us at 503-368-3203 or lnct@nehalemtnet.net for more information. Join Us!

“Wildscapes” Saturday, February 4, 2012

LNCT Benefit Art Show Opening & Artist’s Reception

Capt. Thron Riggs, Columbia River bar pilot, has a deep affinity for the Oregon Coast and particularly the Nehalem Bay area—the subject of many of the paintings in his show “Wildscapes.” Capt. Riggs has chosen to show and sell his work as a benefit for LNCT. Join us for the opening on February 4, 2 - 4 p.m., NCRD Gallery, 36155 9th Street in Nehalem. Meet Capt. Riggs and enjoy the art. The show will be up the entire month of February.



GARDEN CORNER

by *Karen Matthews*
ACF Garden & Poultry Project Manager

One Ton Is A Lot of Food!

This time of year I find myself reflecting back on the things I've learned, the people I've met and the projects I've worked on throughout the year. As an avid gardener and "wannabe" teacher, my favorite volunteer activity is managing the garden at Alder Creek Farm. It is especially rewarding to think about all of the new milestones we reached this year, and there were literally a TON of them!

We had so many new "firsts" but surely the children are high up on the list. This past season we had four Junior Gardeners join our community garden group along with their parents. It was great to see the kids learn and experience new tastes and smells of the garden. The elementary age children were really helpful and fun on our workdays. The preschool kids were just mostly curious and entertaining! Having kids in the garden was a pure joy and we hope to add more young people in coming years.

Several new gardeners joined our ranks; both seasoned gardeners and total novices who had barely grown a radish let alone the myriad of vegetables we produced this past season. Our ranks have grown to close to 30 gardeners and we expect to add a few more in 2012.

Our flock of ducks also grew in numbers, as did our duck caretakers. We integrated a 4-H program and now have junior high students involved in helping raise our slug hunting avians.

Unfortunately this year, we also learned about predators on the farm when the duck population was suddenly



4-H group with their feathered charges. Left to right: Victoria Elligsen, Kalli Swanson, poultry manager Karen Matthews, Greg Elligsen and Rueben Matta. PHOTO BY LAURA SWANSON

reduced. A hard lesson to learn; but this is a farm, replete with all of its challenges. The ducks are not the only critters on the farm; we have snakes and frogs, which always make me smile when I see them in the garden because I know our eco-system is balanced and healthy!

The Community Garden was awarded a grant from the Oregon Community Foundation that is allowing us to "remodel" the greenhouse for enhanced year-round growing and expand our garden area. The OCF grant also funded ADA raised beds so we will be able to accommodate more gardeners in the future.

My favorite highlight of the year is the TON of food that we donated to the North County Food Bank. We surpassed all previous years in donations and given the need in our weak economy it is rewarding that our team of volunteers was able to give back so much to the community.

Message from the Chair (continued from pg. 1)

What I remember best about those days, was walking down the road from my house to the estuary just below what is now Alder Creek Farm. We paused before crossing the creek on fallen logs (no bridge in those days) and talked about how beautiful it would be to see that farm with long grass blowing in the wind, native plants along the riparian zone and old wetlands made new. What we had in common was the absolute awe and wonder at the symbiosis of the natural world and how it was we humans might be a part of and not apart from it.

Last week a small group of volunteers were working on the greenhouse, when for the first time ever, a single swan swooped down and landed in the restored wetland below the barn. If there was ever a reminder of how important it is to look up from our labors, from time to time, to reconnect with the why of whatever we're doing, this was it. As to what kind of swan it was. Well no one could tell for sure. I guess we'll just have to wonder.

—Doug Firstbrook, *LNCT Board Chair*

Communication Survey Will Assist With Technology Upgrades, Planning and More

Included in this newsletter is the Trust's first member/donor/supporter survey. Our reason for allocating time and resources to this effort is two fold: as we continue to upgrade our technology we will soon have options of ways to communicate with those who support our mission. These upgrades require allocation of administrative time but ultimately will mean communicating in the most effective way for all parties involved.

Secondly, as we enter our 10th year in business we turn our attention towards our future goals and resources to meet those goals. Discovering those supporters who have named LNCT in their estate plans is one way we can plan for and envision our future.

We thank you for taking the time to fill out and return the survey in the enclosed envelope. We welcome your questions or comments about this project and all of our ongoing efforts.

Stewardship Highlights include New Models to Care for Land in Perpetuity

When the LNCT acquires a property we take on the responsibility of caring for and protecting that land in perpetuity. The term “in perpetuity” can sound pretty daunting, but as one of the people responsible for caring for Trust properties I find there is also great freedom in that thought.

When you take the time to really pay attention to natural processes, it becomes clear that once the level of human disturbance is diminished the land heals itself over time. I see this in all of the wetland plants sprouting around the seasonal pond at Alder Creek Farm brought there by migrating waterfowl. I see it at Cedar Creek Wetlands where beavers are building dams, raising the water level and allowing native wetland sedges and rushes to replace the dense invasive reed canary grass. Knowing this makes it clear that our primary responsibility is to tread lightly on this land and make sure others do the same.

Knowing that undisturbed land will largely restore itself also casts our stewardship efforts in a different light. We are doing the work for all of us short-lived species who live in the here and now and not in perpetuity. We plant salmonberry as a food source for birds, we remove invasive plants to create space for those first elderberry moving in, we plant spruce adjacent to the creek to create shaded, cool waters for salmon and trout, we protect pasture lands to provide forage for elk. And we create healthy wetlands to filter our water, we plant trees to create places of natural beauty and reflection, we add large woody debris to streams to create healthy sustainable fisheries for fisherman, and we remove Armenian blackberry in recognition of the past negative impacts that people have had on the land in the hopes that we will leave healthier more functional ecosystems to the next generation.

Recognizing that our stewardship activities are for all local resident species, most definitely including humans, we are slowly working towards a different model of stewarding land. At Cedar Creek Wetlands, for *(continued on pg. 4)*



Neighborhood volunteer Scott Wagner assists with caging of new “crop circles” at Cedar Creek Wetlands in Bayside Gardens.

PHOTO BY LORRAINE ORTIZ

Volunteer Spotlight: Chip Hall—The Man Who Planted Trees

Remember “*L’Homme qui plantait des arbres*” the 1953 story of Elzéard Bouffier, a man who single handedly planted hundreds of trees in a desolate, treeless valley which grew into a veritable Garden of Eden? In many ways Chip is our own Elzéard and epitomizes the inspiration for us all to plant trees.



Chip Hall has been active in stewardship activities and planting trees since 2005.

PHOTO BY JUDITH JONES

Chip Hall brings his love of the outdoors and trees from his youth growing up in rural Oregon, working on farms in the summer and helping out at his parent’s rhododendron nursery just outside of Eugene. The son of educators, Chip went on to have a career in education himself, spending several of those years teaching in Tillamook County schools. After retiring, he returned to Manzanita and began his association with LNCT.

Working on stewardship projects for the Trust is his passion. Chip loves the solace and satisfaction he receives from his projects at the Trust properties. But it is Alder Creek Farm that has his heart. He speaks about the farm as a place to be active, peaceful, useful and independent; as he learns and grows by his actions helping to return this beautiful 54-acre former dairy farm to its natural state.

Chip particularly loves to plant and tend trees and over the years has become an expert at assisting small trees become successful big trees in a place where elk, beaver and other mammals might have other ideas.

His enthusiasm for LNCT, the Farm and the other Trust properties makes Chip an enthusiastic tour guide for those visiting from out of town or unsuspecting people who happen to turn down Underhill Lane and find themselves driving into Alder Creek Farm. Though Chip enjoys his solitude on the beautiful acreage, he also enjoys the people he works with and says that he has never met a finer or more friendly group of inspiring people anywhere.

The Trust is tremendously fortunate to have a friend like Chip Hall. Those in Tucson, Arizona know this too as Chip and his partner Sherri spend four months a year in the desert and assist in efforts there to remove buffelgrass (*pennisetum ciliare*), an invasive species in that landscape.

Chip hopes to inspire others through his volunteerism with LNCT. He encourages others to come and explore opportunities to do small or large projects in this beautiful place. He says, “*come and walk the land, look at birds and elk, listen to the quiet, help restore something to its natural state. Adopt a project, learn where the tools are kept, ask for help or not, and make these lands your own.*”

Thank you Chip for being such an inspiration.



LOWER NEHALEM
COMMUNITY TRUST
beading the necklace of people and place

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UPCOMING 2012 EVENTS

Saturday, January 28: Pie Day/Night Events—a favorite!

Savory Pie Making Workshop with pastry chef Kim Miller, 12:30 - 4 p.m. Workshop fee includes all ingredients and instruction. \$40 for LNCT members, \$50 for non-members. This workshop fills up fast, so call soon!

Star-studded Pie Auction with Peter Newman and Megan (Liz) Cole and all-you-can-eat pie feed. 7 p.m. Nehalem United Methodist Church, 36050 10th Street in Nehalem, \$5 admission at the door.

Saturday, February 4: “Wildscapes” Artist Reception for Capt. Thron Riggs, 2 - 4 p.m. NCRD Gallery, 36155 9th Street in Nehalem. Benefit art show featuring 30+ local landscape paintings will be up the entire month of February.

Sunday, March 4: Growing Fruit on the Oregon Coast with Jim Gilbert of One Green World, 1 - 3 p.m. Come and learn tips, tricks and techniques for growing and maintaining fruit trees, bushes, canes and more. Alder Creek Farm. Free to LNCT members, \$5 non-members

Saturday, March 24 (tentative): “All About Beavers” 11 a.m. Alder Creek Farm. Explore outdoors as we visit beaver dams and their surrounding habitat. Free to LNCT members, \$5 non-members.

Saturday, April 14: Cloche Building, 1 - 3 p.m., with Tillamook County Master Gardeners Rick and Janet Anderson. Build a 4' x 8' hoop-style garden cloche used to extend the growing season. Free to LNCT members, \$5 non-members.

check our website—www.NehalemTrust.org—for more information & new event postings

Stewardship Highlights *(continued from pg. 3)*

instance, we are engaging the neighbors, those whose are already most closely tied to this property, in caring for this land. With neighborhood support we had four workdays cutting reed canary grass, laying down cardboard and chips, planting native plants and fencing those plantings from May through December. Our neighborhood meeting in November explained our efforts at Cedar Creek and recruited people to look after the land and plants on an ongoing basis.

Another new approach and highlight this year was having a stewardship intern from June through August. Ida Gianopulos brought her understanding of ecology and ecosystems and her enthusiasm for stewardship work to help us accomplish many of our 2011 goals including an aquatic insect survey of Vosberg Creek. Other tasks we accomplished with the help of Ida and many community volunteers, was the caging of cedar trees at Alder Creek Farm,

the removal of the aquatic invasive parrot's feather from Cedar Creek Wetlands, the planting of new trees at Alder Creek uplands and the initial removal of “old growth” scotch broom and invasive blackberries at our newest acquisition, Sitka Wetlands.

When I walk out on all our lands, Alder Creek Farm where wetlands are gradually reclaiming pasture, Vosberg Creek where a healthy riparian ecosystem is now thriving, Cedar Creek where recent plantings are slowly taking root, and Sitka Wetlands which is gradually returning to be a beautiful spruce swamp, I see both the healing being done by the land itself and the positive impacts of our stewardship work. In the end, the goals of a healthy landscape are accomplished by working together with a healthy community of people who wish to leave this place we live a better place, treading lightly on the land, encouraging others to do the same and taking other small steps to encourage more vibrant and functional local ecosystems. —*Erich Miller*

Get Outside! Join us for ongoing Volunteer Stewardship—Wednesdays, 10 a.m. - Noon. Call 503-368-3203 for details..