



Willapa Tidings

Vol. 7 No. 2 ~ Winter 2007

Newsletter of the Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge



Waiting For A Forest

Story ~ Page 2

Waiting For A Forest

By Kathleen Sayce

Walking down from Sawlog Slough on Long Island last year, I realized that it had been almost 30 years since my last trip on some of those roads. In 1975, I worked for the refuge as a timber cruiser, one of six staff who inventoried the federally owned stands prior to the 'timber for land and timber' trade. I was at the Refuge for only six months, but those months made a lasting impression on my life. As a new ecologist, fresh degree in hand, I hadn't learned how to put forest ecology methods into practice. Long Island took care of that.

In 1975, many of the forest stands between Sawlog and the old growth stand were dense with young alder and hemlock, around ten to twenty years old. We couldn't see into the dense thickets; driving along them was like going down hot green dusty tunnels. We often came upon grouse taking dust baths in the roads. Once, I had my cruising



partner Daniel Schlottmann stop the jeep so I could wade into the brush to see into a young stand, and it was brush all the way — thick young alders and hemlock trees, bare ground under complete shade, branches to the ground except for game trails. Dan gave me an intense few months of forestry training; one of his constant assertions being that logged stands eventually recovered much of the character of old growth forests as they aged. He insisted that these young thickets would look more like older forests soon. All it would take was time. At twenty-four, a decade seemed like forever, but I worked on the visioning despite my skepticism.

When we conserve land, we deliberately put aside other uses to let the land be. As individuals, we can't always envision the outcomes. Our only guide may be a determined inner conviction that leaving it alone is better than the alternatives. I knew then that whatever happened to the young stands, protecting the ancient stands on Long Island was worth it. Dan told me what this forest would look like in decades to come, and I visualized it — it was my first real exercise in envisioning a future forest. *Cont. Page 3*

Today these stands look very different. The alders are largely gone from the roadsides; western hemlocks overtook them years ago. Hemlocks form a closed canopy above the road. There's little sunlight on the roads, and the grouse get their dust baths somewhere else. There are light gaps and decaying logs, mosses, lush sword ferns, salal and salmonberry thickets, patches of old red alder, seedling hemlock and Sitka spruce in the light gaps. The under-canopy has opened up into a lush high-ceiling forest. As forests go, this one is still young, but now it really looks like a young cousin to old growth.

Last year, walking past miles of now slightly older hemlocks, we all saw the promise of thirty years ago come to reality. All it took was the discipline to conserve, step back and wait. The strength of the National Wildlife Refuge System is its capacity to hold lands for generations, being an institutional repository of natural landscapes. Without refuges, today we could be looking at developments, even at resorts on Long Island, and both young and ancient forests would be only a memory.

Annual Membership Gathering

By Carole Wiegardt

WILLAPA BAY — On Saturday, November 18, 2006 about three dozen members of Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge gathered at the Refuge headquarters for their annual meeting and board election. They breezed through the routine business such as elections, annual review, and some minor modifications to the bylaws, but the highlight was a chance for the members to hear Ron Craig of the Willapa Bay Fisheries Enhancement Group speak on the subject: "Salmon Restoration on Willapa Bay".

The Friends of Willapa NWR, about 355 members strong, volunteer hours of time to refuge projects. They hold educational programs for school children, help with trail maintenance and invasive species control, rehabilitate stream beds and endangered species habitat, award scholarships: to name a few of their endeavors. They are always looking for additional opportunities — and members. All types of talents and skills, from news article writing, to teaching, to manual labor, are welcomed and promptly put to use.

"Without all of you contributing to this program," said refuge employee Kristine Massin, "we wouldn't be able to do half of what we do." Massin has worked at various refuges, and she said, "I have never, ever seen a friends group that is as effective, *Continued Page 4*

Annual Membership Gathering cont. well organized, and fun to work with as the group here. This group does a phenomenal job.”

Ron Craig, the featured speaker, gave a brief historical review of the activities of the group and outlined future plans. Previous to the Board there were some Willapa Bay fishermen who formed a group to discuss what problems they were facing and what they could do to create a more productive fish population. From that group the Board was developed which has obtained funding for and managed stream enhancement projects.

Using a very well organized and colorful Power Point presentation, Ron explained the methods that have been used to ‘clean up a stream’. The first step is removal of culverts, which were replaced by bridges. The swiftly moving water in the culverts was an obstacle for the Chum salmon. Then large woody debris was added at appropriate locations to also slow the velocity of the water and give resting sites for the salmon. Slowing the velocity also allowed gravel to be deposited on the streambed, which is necessary for the salmon reproductive process.



Friends of Willapa NWR members listen to Ron Craig, featured speaker at the Annual Friends Meeting
Photo by Bev Arnoldy

From 1985 to 2001, millions of salmon were raised in the local hatcheries and released into Willapa Bay streams. In 2001, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife made a decision to limit the ability of the hatcheries and the Enhancement Board to obtain eggs. Since then, the abundance of Chum salmon has decreased dramatically. Concurrent with that situation there has also been an increase in the number of gill net licenses from 150 in 1987 to 460 in 2006. The Fisheries Enhancement Board is currently undertaking the task of studying the fish decline.

Having outlined the stream restoration activities of the Fish Enhancement Board and some of the current problems in the fishery in Willapa Bay, Ron went on to show the Friends group some of the community projects the Board has been involved in South Bend. They received funding and managed the building of a boat launch in 2003-04. In 2005, their next project was the construction of piers and floats and for their future project they are applying for funds for a Nature Trail along the Willapa River.

For more info on Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, visit: <http://www.friendsofwillaparefuge.org> To find out more about the Refuge, call 360-484-3482.



**Many Thanks to our
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for their Support**

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Northern Oyster Co.
Okie's Sentry Market
Port of Peninsula
Sandridge Topsoil
Seatow of Portland & Astoria
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Taylor Shellfish Farms

Welcome New Members!

As of December 2006

Ruth Jensen ~ Individual
Anthony Werdahl ~ Individual
Mel & Alice Hawkins ~ Family
David & Linda Palmer ~ Family
Trisha Kiliany ~ Family
Claudia I. Justice ~ Family
Pat Williams ~ Family
Tim & Mary Miller ~ Family
Katherine H. O'Neil ~ Patron
Elizabeth Millard ~ Patron
Michael and Sandy Spencer ~ Patron
Emily Brunner ~ scholarship recipient
Paul Blaylock, Jr. ~ Youth Volunteer
John Hayes ~ Youth Volunteer
Tiffany Hubbard ~ Youth Volunteer
Luke Jensen ~ Youth Volunteer
Sadie Newell ~ Youth Volunteer
Ben Weidner ~ Youth Volunteer

Meet The New Newsletter Editor

Suzy Whittey, a transplanted Michigan resident, who has spent the last 21 years in the Pacific Northwest, is our new newsletter editor for Willapa Tidings. Suzy is a self-taught naturalist, who has conducted studies on Canadian geese and has received several awards for her studies.

Suzy spent several years at the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge as the volunteer coordinator for the Refuge. Suzy has been very active

in the Friends of Willapa NWR since 2002. She was on the Friends board in 2003 and 2004 as well as active in the creation of the 4th grade environmental education program. In recent years, Suzy has presented wonderful programs sponsored by the Friends of Willapa NWR on the natural history of the local area, always titled "Critter Talk".

Suzy and her husband Chuck relocated from Vancouver in 2000 and were the founders and editors of the Beachcomber Advertiser. Suzy brings a wealth of knowledge of the natural history of the Pacific Northwest as well as excellent newsletter editor skills! Welcome back, Suzy!



President's Letter

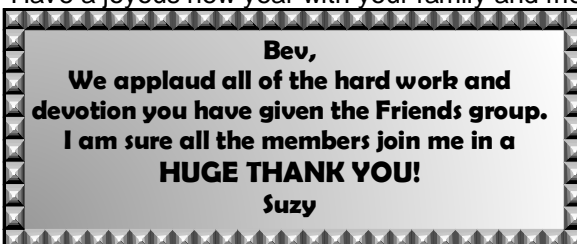


As I write my final president's letter for Willapa Tidings, I find it hard to believe that it has been four years in January that I stepped into this role. It feels like a million years ago and yet it seems just like yesterday. The people that I faced around the table four years ago, with the exception of my husband, Kelly Rupp, are not the same people that sat around the table at the last board meeting this past November. And, this coming January, there will be two new faces around the table at the first board meeting of 2007. They will bring new ideas and new energy to the Friends board. I have a new role as well, past-president. My job will be to help transition the new president, Katherine Mack Driscoll, and vice-president, Amy Cook, into the roles of leaders.

The role of president of the Friends of Willapa NWR has been an incredible personal and professional journey for me. I have met so many people who have volunteered hundreds (collectively, thousands of hours) to volunteer for some project associated with the Refuge, the 4th grade environmental education program, the scholarship program, the Willapa Tidings newsletter -- the list can go on and on. I may have been at the helm of this organization, but it is all you volunteers that have made it so successful.

I thank everyone who has contributed time and money these past four years. You have been great! I do want to highlight one special person, Sandy Profeta, a technical writer from Portland and my good friend. When I asked her to be the newsletter editor almost four years ago, she agreed saying "as long as you're President." Well, Sandy thanks for hanging in there with me!

Have a joyous new year with your family and friends.



Beverly A. Arnoldy
President



Willapa Tidings

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Suzy Whittey, *Editor*

To request an address change, to contribute items of interest (including photos), or to submit articles for publication, please contact Friends of Willapa NWR

Mailing Address

3888 State Route 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707
Phone: 360-665-0115

E-mail

president@friendsofwillaparefuge.org

Web Site

www.friendsofwillaparefuge.org

Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge

A nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation, Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge was established in July 2000 to provide support and assistance to Refuge programs and to enhance awareness and appreciation of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

Board of Directors

President: Katherine Driscoll
Vice President: Amy Cook
Treasurer: Kelly Rupp
Secretary: Michael O'Meagher
Directory Membership: Bill Hutton
Director Publicity: Carole Wiegardt
Director Education: Shawn Stern

Photography Blind Reopens



By Shelly Pollock (Reprinted from
Winter 2006 Willapa Tidings Newsletter)

Wildlife returns as the water rises. This blind was installed for public use by wildlife photographers, at the Tarlett Slough unit off Sandridge Road near Long Beach. Photography enthusiasts can schedule use of this facility, located off of Lone Fir Cemetery Road, through the Willapa Refuge Headquarters. "This photography blind was the first of its kind in Pacific County and we hope the community of wildlife photographers will enjoy the excellent viewing of marsh and forest edge areas," commented Charlie Stenvall, Project Leader of the Willapa NWR. "Access to this blind will not interfere with the birds natural behavior, and the birds need for protected habitat will not be impacted." Active birders and volunteers from the Friends of Willapa Bay National Wildlife Refuge and Charlie Stenvall initially selected the site, which offers seasonal view of migratory ducks and geese in the winter, and in the early spring will attract some shorebirds in from the Bay. Volunteers continue to make improvements near the facility by planting willows and other shrubbery to support bird habitat.

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Meet Our New Board Members 2007

By Bev Arnoldy

Active Friends member, Bill Hutton is one of two new board members for 2007. Bill and his wife Joyce moved to the Oysterville area from Newcastle, WA, a suburb of Seattle. They have lived on the Peninsula full time since October 2004, but before that were frequent visitors for more than thirty years. Bill retired from United Airlines where he was an employee for 35 years. Bill was a baggage handler, a trainer for refueling airplanes and served in elected positions for the IAM, a primary union at United. Bill's interests in the Friends group include volunteering for the exhibition booth for various functions; volunteering as an information guide for the salmon trail, and working with the members in general. Bill is looking forward to serving on the board. Other interests include fishing, hiking (especially beach and bay hikes), vintage autos, reading, computers, and travel.

Michael O'Meagher is the second of our two new board members for 2007.

Michael and his wife Diane moved from Douglass, WY where he was a property and asset manager. Michael and Diane relocated to just outside of Bay Center in 2002. Michael says that they joined the Friends of Willapa NWR because of their enjoyment of nature and they wanted to learn more about the ecological and human activities on Willapa Bay. Other interests include music, amateur radio, camping, boating, and cooking. Yes, oysters and fresh seafood are a new culinary experience!



We look forward to your contributions to the 2007 Friends of Willapa NWR board!

Blind Reopens Cont. The Willapa NWR is home to many of the 300 bird species found in Pacific County, including scores of migrating shorebirds and waterfowl species that depend upon the mudflats and tidelands here for food and rest during their spring and fall travels. The Tarlett Slough area, where the blind is located, is at the southernmost reaches of Willapa Bay and attracts the most number of migrating species because of its diverse habitat, being near the tidelands with marsh, forest, and open grasslands. *Cont. Page 9*

Calendar of Events ~ Volunteer Corner

January - February - March 2007

EVENTS

Wednesday, January 24th ~ Board of Directors meeting starting at 4:00 pm. Send email to kmack@lighthouseproperty.com for location and agenda.

Wednesday, February 28th ~ Board of Directors meeting on starting at 4:00 pm. Send e-mail to kmack@lighthouseproperty.com for location and agenda.

Wednesday, March 28th ~ Board of Directors meeting on starting at 4:00 pm. Send e-mail to kmack@lighthouseproperty.com for location and agenda.

March ~ Friends Gathering: Natural History program facilitated by Friends member, Suzy Whittey. Location and date to be announced

VOLUNTEER CORNER

There are many volunteer opportunities available, if you have the desire and the time to help.

Contact Kristine at 360-484-3482 or kristine_massin@fws.gov

~ Teaching and assisting classes for 4th grade environmental education programs at Naselle Elementary School. Classes include "Introduction to Habitat" in January, and "Amphibians" in March.

~ Pulling gorse at Leadbetter Point.

~ Spreading oystershell at Snowy Plover restoration site at Leadbetter Point.

~ Removing brush at Snowy Plover restoration site at Leadbetter Point.

~ Maintaining trails and campgrounds on Long Island.

~ Maintaining trails at Leadbetter Point.



Blind Reopens Cont. The blind is uniquely designed for wildlife photography with narrow openings for camera equipment, and not recommended for general wildlife viewing. Telephoto/zoom lenses are strongly recommended to ensure long-distance capture of bird activity. Users need to call the Willapa NWR office at **360-484-3482** for access information. There's a short hike to the building.

2007 Scholarship Campaign

The Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge announce the launch of the annual scholarship campaign for their 2007 program. The Friends high school scholarship program provides financial awards to graduating high school seniors from Pacific County who aspire to collegiate education in fish and wildlife management, environmental education, forestry, and related natural resource and conservation fields.

Contributors to the campaign, as well as an endowment gifted to the group by an anonymous donor, have made possible the establishment of a self-sustaining financial resource for the Friends scholarship program. "The exceptionally rich habitat of the Willapa watershed has inspired many youth over the years to pursue advanced education in the environmental and natural resources fields," noted Bev Arnoldy. "With the support of this endowment and the funds generated through this scholarship campaign, we will directly help students achieve their goals of furthering their education."

Each year all graduating seniors of Pacific County are encouraged to apply for this scholarship to support their continued education in environmental studies/science. Information packets and applications are sent to each of the high schools in Pacific County in January. The chairman of the scholarship committee then speaks with each school's senior advisor and science educator to make sure the scholarship is understood and to encourage them to watch for a student who might qualify. The scholarship is also available to students in home schooling.

Last year two girls were awarded \$500 each. Kriste Freese of Ilwaco High School and Emily Brunner, a home schooling student, each had exemplary school records and a history of interest in the environment of Willapa Bay. These young women are an honor to our community.

For more information about the Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge, please contact <http://www.friendsofwillaparefuge.org>. The application for the scholarship will be available on this site in January 2007.

**Please send your tax deductible contributions to:
Scholarship Fund
Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
3888 SR 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707**

The Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge is a registered 501(C) (3) corporation engaging in educational, scientific and civic activities.

Membership Form

- New Member
 Renewal

Invite a friend to Become a Member !

Make checks payable to: Friends of Willapa NWR DATE _____

Send to: Friends of Willapa NWR
3888 Sate Route 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

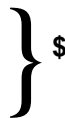
Yes! I want to receive Friends e-mail announcements.

My e-mail address is _____

Contributions to FWNWR are tax deductible.
No goods or services are provided in exchange for your donation.

Memberships

- Individual (\$10)
Family (\$15)
Patron (\$50)
Benefactor (\$100)
Advocate (\$500)
or more



Scholarship Fund Donation

\$ _____

Other Donation
(Supports education Program)

\$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Volunteer Interests

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Public relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental education | <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat restoration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership recruitment | <input type="checkbox"/> Trail and campground maintenance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special projects and events | <input type="checkbox"/> Shorebird and waterfowl monitoring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish and amphibian monitoring |

Thank you for Your Membership and Support!



Willapa Tidings

Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
3888 State Road 101
Ilwaco, WA 98624-9707