



Newsletter

Summer 2009

Message from the President

What a year for weather; I trust your gardens survived the cold weather and the recent heat. We have been engaged in several efforts to keep our City beautiful and green. I hope that you will take some time to enjoy the parks along our streams. Sit on a bench at Lyon Creek Waterfront Preserve; enjoy sitting under the trees and the breezes coming off Lake Washington. Walk through the woods in Grace Cole Nature Park.

Thank you for supporting our very successful fundraiser on December 5, 2009. I enjoyed seeing many of you at the Civic Club. The enthusiasm was contagious; what a great time to meet with friends, learn about the Foundation's efforts over the last 10 years, hear about the importance of working with other organizations to protect the environment in and around Puget Sound, and to support our ongoing projects. I sincerely appreciate your support. For those of you who were unable to attend, there is a link to the slideshow of our accomplishments over the last ten years at www.lfpsf.org.

As you know, we continue to face the prospect of very serious flooding in various parts of the City. The Foundation has been involved in the Lake Ballinger/McAleer Creek Watershed Forum; we've reminded elected officials in Edmonds, Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace, and Shoreline about the importance of implementing natural solutions to stormwater management (trees, wetlands, expanded stream buffers, rain gardens and barrels) in the upper reaches of the Lake Ballinger watershed. Although it will take years to realize the full benefits of these natural solutions, they are relatively low-cost and easily implemented; they need to be implemented now. We need to use similar techniques, including Low Impact Development, in Lake Forest Park to reduce sources of flooding in our own City.

Our work on the Lake Forest Park Urban Forest Task Force to develop and assist the City Council in

implementing a new tree ordinance continues. The Council took an important initial step when it passed an interim ordinance requiring trees that are cut down to be replaced; this interim ordinance will expire on December 31, 2009. We want to have an ordinance that minimizes the complexities for our Citizens while protecting our urban forest. We trust that our children and grand children will be able to enjoy the benefits of our trees for years to come. Please join us when this ordinance is before the Council to let them know how important the natural wonders of Lake Forest Park are to us.

The Foundation, in particular Mamie Bolender, supported the neighbors in restoring Whisper Creek in the vicinity of Cedar Brook School. Invasive species and old pieces of asphalt were removed and a new bridge across the stream was built. This project involved obtaining grants, the hard work of numerous volunteers, and donations from various individuals and area businesses. Without these donations and volunteers the project would not have been possible. Please come try the new bridge and enjoy Whisper Creek.

This summer, we again sent Shorecrest High School students to the North Cascades Institute, North Cascades Wild canoeing and camping program where they learned the importance of protecting our environment and participated in service projects. This 12-day all expense paid trip was made possible by your donations. These students are our future environmental stewards; please continue to support them.

As you know the Foundation holds "Ivy Out" parties on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Your high school students can earn "service hours" at these and other events. Please join us at these events; have some fun in the sun and help keep our parks and rights-of-way healthy.

I look forward to working with all of you throughout the year.

Steve Plusch, President

Redevelopment of The Burke-Gilman Trail

As you know, King County applied to redevelop a 2.3 mile section of the Burke Gilman Trail through Lake Forest Park. A public hearing to consider the County's request for various development permits was held on January 21, 2009. Of concern to the Foundation, and to numerous citizens, was how to identify the trees and wetlands that were to be impacted and how to protect them during the construction activities associated with this development. We believed that trees and wetlands were undercounted. The trail through Lake Forest Park is in very poor condition and the redevelopment will benefit citizens and trail users.

On April 8, 2009, the Hearing Examiner issued his final decision on the conditional use and other general permits for the trail redevelopment. This decision included conditions to identify the trees along the trail, identify the wetlands, and protect both during construction.

The County is now in the process of obtaining the final permits required to proceed with construction. A tree plan which properly identifies the trees which might be adversely impacted or removed is required. A drawing showing the limits of the wetlands and where they might be impacted by construction is also required.

We will all need to be alert during construction of the new trail to see that trees and wetlands are properly protected. If you have any concerns, please contact the LFP Planning Department immediately. Please contact us if your concerns are not addressed promptly.

The Good Stewards Community Wildlife Habitat Project

Nationally, eleven more communities nationally have been officially certified as Community Wildlife Habitats by the National Wildlife Federation. This brings the total to 32. Three more communities in Washington have been certified: Alki, Camano Island and Fidalgo Island/Anacortes have joined LFP and Tukwila.

There are also 12 other Washington communities working toward this certification - the largest number in the nation. These include our close neighbors Shoreline, Edmonds and NE Seattle as well as Bainbridge Island, Bellingham, Central Houghton Neighborhood, Crescent Valley Biodiversity Management Area (BMA), Mercer Island, Poulsbo, Sammamish, Skagit Valley and Whidbey Island. We are delighted to have all of these areas working to create corridors for wildlife throughout Washington.

Anyone interested in certifying their own yard should contact the National Wildlife Federation (<http://www.nwf.org/>) or the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/backyard/>), or call Libby Fiene, 206-365-8867 for information.



Welcome, Denise Peters...

We're pleased that Denise has joined the Board of Directors. Denise is a Pacific Northwest native. Born in Spokane, she has lived in both rural and urban areas, and likes the feeling of country living just outside the big city. For the last fourteen years, she and her husband Mike have made Lake Forest Park their home.

Denise and Mike have two children, Michael and Schuyler. The twins will be in fifth grade this year and were privileged to experience and benefit from the Salmon Restoration Project at Brookside Elementary School.

Denise is a graduate of the University of Washington, where she studied psychology and education. She is currently employed by the Shoreline School District as an elementary educator.

Denise's love of the outdoors and her interest in inquiry based science brought her to the Stewardship Foundation. She is looking forward to helping to develop programs that will encourage young minds to get involved in the preservation of our streams and wetlands. She also hopes to develop a few "educational" geocaches in the areas that the LFPSF has worked so arduously to protect.

LFP Schools Release Salmon Into Local Waters

Students at **Brookside Elementary School** again chose Earth Day, April 22, for the annual release of fingerling salmon into Brookside Creek.

For many years, Coho eggs have been placed in the tank in the school lobby and reared until being released into the stream that runs on the school property. First-grade teacher Katie Johnson remains the powerhouse for the project.

The effort this year was saved from near-calamity through the quick efforts of Jim Siscel, one of the originators of the program, when a problem developed with the chiller. Jim was able to borrow an unused tank and chiller from Echo Lake Elementary and save the day.

Perennial volunteers Carrie LaMarr, Catherine Adams-Gravelly and Jean Reid readied the salmon and escorted the children to the stream bank, where the small fish were wished well and sent on their way to Lake Washington.

As many know, this stream was encased in a culvert when the school was built. A group led by one of the Foundation's founders, Bill Bennett, daylighted the stream more than 10 years ago, making it a fish-friendly habitat once again. The annual release occurs just downstream of the now-defunct culvert opening. When an additional upstream culvert is removed, these fish will have free run from the protected headwaters at Grace Cole Nature Park out to Lake Washington and Puget Sound. Students at Lake Forest Park Elementary School are beginning to dream of daylighting the culverted stream on their grounds, aptly named "Schoolhouse Creek."

Many thanks to Ms. Johnson and her class for the great amount of work put into sustaining this program. The project remains in need of a smaller tank and chiller. If anyone has an approximately 50-gallon tank and/or chiller they would like to trade or donate, please contact the Foundation.

On Saturday, March 28th, a dozen of Diana Bettelli's third-graders at **Lake Forest Park Elementary School** delivered a hundred or so fingerling Coho into the "wild" of the ponds in the Grace Cole Nature Park. Family, friends and three members of the Board of the Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation helped out to make sure that all of the fish (and none of the children) were safely delivered into the water.

Before releasing the Coho, each of the young fish stewards signed a pledge to the salmon to conserve, recycle and respect the environment. The children have watched over these salmon as they hatched and grew in a tank in their classroom at Lake Forest Park Elementary. Hats off to Mrs. Bettelli, who did the lion's share of the work for this year's project. The LFP Elementary salmon rearing program was formerly run by Rick Purn, an LFP teacher and Board member of the Stewardship Foundation, who is now teaching in Korea.

The 15-acre Grace Cole Nature Park is the newest city park, and is named for former State Representative Grace Cole, who was a tireless advocate for children in her 27 years on the School Board and at the state legislature. She and her husband Carl raised their four boys in a home just above the park. The park became a reality through the tireless efforts of the Stewardship Foundation and State Senator Darlene Fairley through the use of state and King County Conservation Futures funds.

It is hoped that these fish will live for a year in the ponds before venturing out to sea via Lake Washington. The Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation hopes to trap and release in the coming months to see how many of the fish remain in the ponds. The Foundation also has regular work parties at the park, removing invasives, planting natives, and helping Mother Nature repair this beautiful open space. Long-time residents will recall when the road-side emerging wetland was nothing more than a trash heap and mud tracks from illegal four-wheeling. If you are interested in participating, please check the website at www.lfpsf.org.

The Foundation is indebted to a member of the Board of Directors for all her efforts to restore streams, protect our parks and rights-of-way from invasive species, and build bridges between communities. Over the years this not-so-mysterious person has obtained grant money; permits from the City, State, and Army Corps of Engineers (no small feat); found volunteers; found businesses to donate materials; and designed and managed numerous projects to remove barriers to salmon in the streams of Lake Forest Park. Who is this "Mystery Treasure?" Please see page 7 to find out.

Farewell...

Carol Dahl, a founding board member of the Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation who served as our president for 5 years, has retired from the Board of Directors as of August 1, 2009. She will remain to serve on our Advisory Board.

We have been extremely fortunate to have had Carol serving the Foundation as an exceptionally inspirational and capable director and as a friend for the past eleven years. She brought to the board a wealth of organizational experience, having served as chair of the LFP Parks Commission, on the boards of the Shoreline/LFP Arts Council, Seattle Tilth, and served as a volunteer for the Seattle Chamber Music Society and the Washington Toxics Coalition. Simultaneously with her tenure on the LFPSF Board, she served on the WRIA 8 Education and Outreach committee. She has been appointed to the board of King County Conservation Futures Citizens' Committee, representing District 1 King county, by Council Member Bob Ferguson. This committee makes recommendations for acquisition of property for parks and open space. Carol is active in Rotary Club and the Lake Forest Park "Secret Garden and Tour" Committee. She served with dedication on the Lake Forest Park Legacy Project Task Force, helping to create a 100-year vision for the City. She is dedicated to this forward-thinking effort of our City and will remain active with the Legacy Project Implementation Committee. This coming year she looks forward to being an advisor to the LFP Youth Council.

Carol is a true visionary. From the beginning she grasped where the Foundation needed to go as an organization, beyond its immediate pressing goals, and what we needed to do to get there. She impressed upon the Board members the importance of environmental education for people of all ages and was the principle motivator for the Foundation's financial support and participation in the North Cascades Wild program, a 12-day summer service and environmental education opportunity since 2006 for underserved local Shorecrest High School students. She taught us how to be fund-raisers and rallied the troops to get it done.

Carol and Vern are justifiably proud of their granddaughter, Alex, who graduated from Shorecrest High School in June and will be attending Western Washington University School of Business this Fall.

Carol, we'll miss you at Board meetings, but it's a comfort to know we can contact you for advice. Thank you for enabling the Foundation's growth into a strong and effective entity in our community.

The Whisper Creek Restoration and New Footbridge

The Cedarbrook community, which straddles the boundaries of Lake Forest Park and Shoreline, has come together with the assistance of the Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation and some very dedicated volunteers to restore a reach of Whisper Creek and to provide a footbridge across that small creek on a route which experiences a large amount of pedestrian use. Dog walkers, joggers, students coming and going to bus stops, and folks accessing the playgrounds at Cedarbrook School have until recently been crossing on two railroad ties precariously laid across the creek.

The project started when The Foundation received a grant of \$4200 for habitat enhancement from the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). Funds for the grant came from King County Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks. This windfall occurred because of the successful efforts of Foundation Board Member Libby Fiene and her Habitat Committee who led the City of Lake Forest Park to certification by NWF as a Community Wildlife Habitat, the 21st community in the U.S. to successfully reach that goal.

The Foundation decided that Whisper Creek would be a good choice for habitat improvement. Vegetation in the buffer of the creek at 20th Avenue and NE 190th was a virtual monoculture of the very invasive Japanese, or Bohemian, knotweed. This non-native species grows so robustly it crowds out all native species. It also spreads rapidly along the course of a stream, since the plant stem consists of sequential nodes similar to bamboo, each of which will sprout into one or multiple plants if a piece of the plant becomes lodged in soil somewhere along a stream. It also spreads rapidly via 15-foot-long underground rhizomes. The decision was made to clear the site of this invasive plant and replace it with native vegetation which will provide the insects and organic matter more suitable to native stream species.

The community decided that a footbridge across the creek would be a significant asset. North City Lumber generously donated the lumber needed for the bridge. NFW agreed that some of the grant money designated to habitat could be used to provide the footings for the bridge.

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...*Whisper Creek, continued from Page 4*

The number one hero in this effort was Doug Clark, a mason and nearby resident, who was willing to take charge of the bridge project. Starting with digging for the footings, the work began. Several setbacks interfered along the way. One involved a spring in one of the footing holes, keeping the water in that hole at creek level. With Doug's perseverance and ingenuity the footings were finally successfully completed.

On "B" (for bridge)-day, the beams and decking, courtesy of North City Lumber, were expertly and efficiently put in place to form the bridge by father and son master builders, George and Joshua Piano and some good helpers, including Doug Clark, Ray Streleki, Jake Libaire, and Jim Beckley, all from the neighborhood. Walkers, dogs, bikers, moms with strollers, and even folks in wheelchairs can now cross the creek with ease. A ribbon-cutting party on Sunday, May 24, honored volunteers and celebrated the accomplishment.

In tandem with the bridge project, volunteers led by Mamie Bolender, project director for the Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation, were digging out knotweed and blackberry roots, mulching and covering some areas with weed block in an attempt to keep the robust knotweeds at bay. A few native plants have been put in, and more are on the way. Roots remaining in the ground are still shooting up knotweed plants despite approved chemical injection

into the stalks for two consecutive years, root removal and weed block. Control by pulling and further root removal is continuing. Ivy OUT volunteers spent July 11, their regular volunteer day, digging roots and planting native plants at Whisper Creek.

The latest development occurred on August 5 when a beautiful naturally sculpted basalt pillar, carefully chosen by Doug Clark from the quarry yard was laid across two other stones at the 20th Avenue street end north of the creek. It will serve as a barrier for the street end and as a resting bench. (See accompanying photo.) An additional \$1000 grant from the NWF, funded by the Boeing Company made this addition possible. It also made possible the purchase of additional plants, some tools and a small pump for irrigation during this extra hot, dry summer.

Large salmon and steelhead spawned in this tributary of McAleer Creek at one time, according to long-time residents. Small trout and stream lamprey now make this small stream their home. This restoration is one small step toward a goal of the Foundation to restore this creek and all others in our City to a condition which will again support former salmon runs.

There is still work to be done here. Volunteers will be needed to install plants and to dig more knotweed roots. Please call Mamie at 206-364-4410 if you'd like to be notified of work parties.



Doug Clark and Mamie Bolender at the "Sitting Rock" at the base of the new Whisper Creek Bridge

New Projects at Grace Cole Nature Park

Two developments are taking place this year at Grace Cole Nature Park. The first is a restoration of the wetlands in the flat portion of the park to the north of the Boardwalk. This area was historically wetlands, but it was disturbed and filled by development efforts from the 1960s until the City acquired the land in 2002. The restoration will consist of two phases: one, to be performed in late August, will be to excavate shallow pond-like depressions north of the Boardwalk. The second phase, to be performed in November, will be to plant native wetland plants in and around the new shallow ponds. The intent is to create more area providing wetland hydrology - due to standing water in the shallow ponds - and to promote more wetland flora and fauna, restoring the current meadow to its historical wetland state. The ponds will be seasonal, only holding water during the winter.

The second project is the construction of a new trail leading up to the former building site, which is the flat area at the end of the current trail leading to the southwest corner of the park. This new trail will be safer than the existing trail due to a less steep grade, and it will contain erosion control measures to stabilize the slopes immediately surrounding the trail.

Funding for these projects came from a King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks WaterWorks grant, and from City of Lake Forest Park Real Estate Excise Tax - capital projects fund.

Birds Wintering in Urban Landscapes

We had a wonderful time this past winter hosting an ongoing bird-banding study in our yard in Lake Forest Park. Every other Sunday from mid-September to mid-April, a dedicated group of trained banders and other volunteers spent 3 to 4 hours studying how our urban Puget Sound landscape supports the songbirds that spend the winter here. The Puget Sound Bird Observatory is hoping to better understand for which species the urban winter habitat is important; what breeding populations are represented; how wintering birds use the urban landscape; and what role backyards, parks, and invasive plants play.

This study is a project of PSBO which has teamed up with the Lake Forest Park Stewardship Foundation and the Shoreline Community Wildlife Habitat Project.

PSBO initiated this project by color-banding Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Dark-eyed Juncos and Fox Sparrows in backyards and parks in several study sites around greater Seattle including our location in Lake Forest Park. One of the goals of this project in the long run is to educate citizen scientists so that they can be spokespersons for habitat preservation. They also hope to have native plant landscapers document birds' use of fruits and berries in their yards and to involve school kids in sighting and reporting color-banded birds.

Bird populations have declined precipitously due to a barrage of threats over their entire range. As birds dwindle, our demand for better information on bird populations increases. At the same time, new internet technology allows amateur field ornithologists to collect and contribute data to improve our understanding of bird populations and their needs. Only with sound data can we encourage good decisions about land uses to minimize our footprint and preserve wild places and their birds. PSBO's goal is to mobilize citizens to monitor their own bird populations effectively and to channel data they gather to inform management decisions.

If you'd like to learn more about this project or be involved with the bandings in Lake Forest Park or in Shoreline (just above Grace Cole Nature Park), you can go to the PSBO website, pugetsoundbirds.org, or call Libby Fiene at 206-365-8867.

Car Washing and Water Quality

Did you know that washing your car, boat, or motor home in your driveway or in the street may be the most environmentally harmful household chore you perform? Doing so releases chemicals that have accumulated from driving - including asbestos, heavy metals and oil - directly into our streams and the lake. In addition, the soaps used contain phosphates and other chemicals that can harm fish and other organisms.

Did you know that it has been a violation of the Lake Forest Park code for some time to wash your vehicle in your driveway or in the street where the waste water can enter a storm drain or evaporate in the street where the next rainfall will carry the waste into the drain?

On July 23, 2009, the Council adopted Ordinance 1000, An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Lake Forest Park Adding a new Chapter 16.25, "Water Quality" to the Lake Forest Park Municipal Code. This ordinance adopts regulations related to the control of illicit discharges into the City's Ground and Surface Water. This ordinance will be in effect by the time you receive this newsletter and can result in serious fines.

This ordinance lists vehicle and boat washing as an activity which produces illicit discharges. The City states that the next time you need to wash your car consider the following alternatives:

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...*Car Washing, continued from Page 6*

- Using a commercial car wash is an environmentally friendly alternative because the water is typically used more than once and is discharged into the sanitary sewer system for treatment.
- If you cannot visit a commercial car wash, wash your car on your lawn or any vegetated surface because the chemicals and soap will infiltrate into the soil rather than flowing directly into streams.

If you don't want anyone else to wash your car, and you don't have any lawn or vegetated surface accessible to the street, you need to take additional precautions to insure that no illicit discharge enters the stormwater system:

- Use rolled up towels and an Oil Sorbent Sock in the gutter to trap the car wash water.
- Use a minimum amount of bio-degradable soap.
- Use a triggered nozzle to minimize the amount of water that is used.
- Dispose of excess soapy water in the sanitary sewer (toilet).

The City is currently developing policies to implement Ordinance 1000. It's possible that it will be very difficult to wash your car in the street or driveway legally. Until then, please exercise the care described above to protect the fish in our streams and the lake.

The Stewardship Foundation's "Mystery Treasure"

This treasure is one of the founders of the Stewardship Foundation, Mamie Bolender. Mamie is tireless in her efforts to improve our streams and wetlands. Recently, she was honored by The King County Extension Land and Water Stewards for all of her work in Lake Forest Park as a Land and Water Steward. Among the major restoration projects that Mamie has accomplished, with the help of many volunteers and contractors, are Brookside Creek (the Hoy property), Lower Brookside Creek (the Wilcox property), and the Whisper Creek Restoration and Bridge Construction. Information on the Brookside Creek restoration projects can be found on our Web site at www.lfpcf.org/BrooksideCreek.

Mamie's most recent major project was the restoration of Whisper Creek, which included removing invasive species and planting native plants. This project also included the design and construction of a new, safe bridge to replace the old railroad ties, which were not a safe way to cross the creek. This project unified the neighbors around Whisper Creek and in addition was instrumental in creating a coalition to save Cedarbrook Park. (See page 4 for more information on the Whisper Creek project.) Mamie and friends are shown in the photograph below at the dedication of the bridge over Whisper Creek.

We are all indebted to Mamie for the countless hours that she has spent ensuring that these projects were completed successfully.





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Send inquiries and address data to:

P.O. Box 82861
Kenmore, WA 98028

email : info@lfpsf.org
On the Web: www.lfpsf.org
Phone: (206) 361-7076

Our Mission Statement:

To contribute to the well-being of our
community by fostering awareness,
understanding, appreciation, and
stewardship of our natural environment;
and by preserving and enhancing
parks and open spaces.

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LFP Stewardship Foundation
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