



Newsletter

Fall 2006

Message from the President

Every spring and summer I continue to be alarmed by the growing number of noxious weeds I see cropping up throughout the City. Non-native invasive species are becoming a big problem. These “big bullies”, having escaped cultivation, crowd out native and ornamental plants in landscapes, invade our wetlands and riparian areas, and alter the structure and composition of our natural communities. Once established, many are extremely persistent and are devilish to remove.

Some of our most troublesome “invasive” invasives in Lake Forest Park include Japanese Knotweed, English Ivy and Herb Robert - interesting names but serious invaders. Thickets of 10 to 12 feet tall Japanese Knotweed, a member of the Buckwheat family, can be seen growing profusely along Bothell Way, the Burke-Gilman trail and throughout the city. Its long arched branches are covered with large green leaves and sprays of showy greenish-white flowers. Knotweed thrives in any moist soil, in river cobble, and in full or partial sunlight. Most common in the flood zone of creeks, it also grows in roadside ditches, other moist areas, and beaches.

English Ivy escapes from landscaped plantings and readily establishes itself and spreads in shaded forested or natural areas. These ivy mats provide convenient hiding areas for rats

and other vermin. Fast growing ivy, a member of the Ginseng family, can impact all three zones of a deciduous or conifer plant community - the forest floor, the shrub area, and the tree canopy. Mature trees covered with ivy become top-heavy and are more likely to blow down.

Herb Robert is a hardy, persistent and shade tolerant weed belonging to the Geranium family. It thrives in forested communities as the dominant ground cover, displacing native and beneficial plants. It flowers in all shades of pink from early spring until late fall, is sticky to the touch with a distinct odor.

By law, noxious weed control on your property is your responsibility, but there is information and help available. The King County Noxious Weed Control Program has helpful printed materials and other information that you can request by phone when you call (206) 296-0290 or by email at noxious.weeds@metrokc.gov. Their website is <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/weeds>. You can also contact the Stewardship Foundation at (206)361-7076 or by email at info@lfpsf.org. We especially want to know if you have Knotweed growing on your property. We can provide education about Knotweed and other aggressive noxious weeds, or offer to help those controlling these “bullies” in our area so give us a call.

--Carol Dahl

***We're happy to welcome a new
board member...***

Carolyn Armanini, a stream side resident, is a longtime resident of Lake Forest and brings to the Stewardship Foundation experience in policy, finance, governance, advocacy, leadership, communications and a longtime interest in conservation issues. She was elected to the Lake Forest Park City Council where she served with extraordinary dedication for three terms. Carolyn also serves on the King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee, which she has chaired since the fall of 2005, and is the City's representative on the Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee. Prior to her election to the City Council, Carolyn was appointed to the LFP Environmental Quality Commission and served for over three years, including terms as Chair and Vice-Chair. She also served as Fire Commissioner for the Northshore Fire Department. Her background is in finance and property management, the field in which she currently works. Carolyn enjoys her garden, friends and family, and the companionship of her Great Dane.

And we say Good-bye and Thanks...

...To our Board Treasurer, Peggy Stephenson. For seven years Peggy has been an incredible resource and a great voice of experience to our organization. Her warm smile and cheery disposition, coupled with her many years teaching business classes before retiring after 16 years as Director and then Dean of the Business Division of Edmonds Community College, helped her fellow board members appreciate and better understand budgets, financial reports and the ins & outs of the Auction. Peggy is getting married the end of September and moving to our neighboring city of Mountlake Terrace. She and her new husband, David Dahl, look forward to traveling, gardening, raising prize dahlias, and volunteering in her grandchildren's classrooms. The Stewardship Foundation appreciates Peggy's unique and valuable service and her dedication is greatly appreciated. Peggy, we wish you all the best in this new chapter of your life.

Saturday, October 21 is "Make a Difference Day"

In Lake Forest Park it will be celebrated with a volunteer work party at Grace Cole Nature Park and the ***official opening of the new park.***

Bring gloves and cutting and digging tools for the work party,
which will begin at 9 AM.

Around noon our new Nature Park will be dedicated.

A barbecue lunch will follow.

Watch the Town Crier and the Enterprise for more details.

Even if you can't make the work party, be sure to come for the dedication. Grace Cole Nature Park is located at NE 166th and 30th Ave. NE. Head south off 178 St. NE on 28th Ave. NE and you'll come to it.

Good Stewards Update

The Good Stewards have had a busy spring and summer. As noted elsewhere (see p. 9), Lake Forest Park Elementary School completed its certification in late May as a Schoolyard Wildlife Habitat.



The June/July issue of the National Wildlife Magazine featured Lake Forest Park's Community Wildlife project in a very nice article about the various projects underway in the Puget Sound Area. Terri and Dale Cote's garden was given a full page spread.

The Good Stewards were hosts in late June to an exciting all-day workshop sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation for the leaders of all of the Community Wildlife projects in Puget Sound. It was a wonderful way to exchange ideas about our various projects.

Plans are moving along in the redevelopment of Blue Heron Park as a Community Demonstration Garden. Michelle LeMoine, David Hepp and Rick Purn have created an initial redesign plan. We have obtained several hundred plants and a full complement of signs through grants from the Russell Family Foundation and REI. This group, along with Tom Bauman, will be scheduling work parties this fall and hope that many of you will participate.

Thanks to all of you who have certified your yards. We now have an impressive 161 Certified Backyard Wildlife Habitats in Lake Forest Park. We hope many more of you will certify your yards so that we can have substantial wildlife corridors throughout our community.

To certify your yard with the National Wildlife Federation or both NWF and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife:

Apply online at www.nwf.org/bwh

Paper applications for certification are available at
Wild Birds Unlimited-Lake Forest Park.

Cost: \$20 for both, \$15 NWF only, \$5 WDFW only.

Questions: email Libby Fiene at lfpwildlife@comcast.net

Now that Lake Forest Park has met the qualifications for certification by the National Wildlife Federation as a Community Wildlife Habitat by having at least 150 certified yards, 2 certified businesses, Lake Forest Park Elementary School certified as a Schoolyard Wildlife Habitat, all 5 parks certified, and having hosted many community-wide outreach events, we are planning a ceremony in late spring or early summer to officially certify the entire city as a Community Wildlife Habitat. More information will be forthcoming as we finalize our plans.

Lake Forest Park Urban Forest Task Force Update

It's easy to see why "Forest" is our middle name. However, the City is losing a significant number of trees without replacement—more than one a day over the last year alone. There is a section of our municipal code designed to preserve the forested character of the City. The Urban Forest Task Force, appointed by Mayor Dave Hutchinson, was formed in February in response to concerns about tree loss associated with the subdivision of building lots and other development pressures. Our trees are essential to the City's character. People who have moved to or returned to live in Lake Forest Park often comment that they did so because of the wonderful environment in the City, particularly the trees and streams. As most of you already know, trees have many benefits; they

- Clean and purify the air by
 - Absorbing pollutants: ozone, carbon monoxide, etc.
 - Removing atmospheric carbon dioxide
 - Reducing other pollutants
- Clean our water by
 - Filtering and purifying groundwater by
 - Absorbing pollutants
 - Reducing storm water runoff and soil erosion
- Improve our quality of life by
 - Providing privacy
 - Adding aesthetic value
 - Screening unsightly urban infrastructure
 - Acting as very effective wind breaks
- Provide economic benefits by
 - Positively affecting consumer perceptions and behaviors
 - Increasing real estate values
 - Extending the life of paved surfaces
 - Improving economic sustainability
- Provide valuable wildlife habitat and corridors
- Conserve energy by shading our homes and paved surfaces
- Strengthen our communities and reduce crime & physical violence
- Improve traffic safety
- Provide sociological benefits

The Mayor directed the group to study what changes might be necessary to the City's tree code and to identify other activities that could help reverse the City's declining tree population.

The Task Force has been collecting input via surveys and conducted a citizen focus group on June 20, 2006 to get initial input on tree issues. One of the findings from the focus group is that, although the tree ordinance has been on the books over five years, a lot of people still don't know it exists, or what it requires. For example, a tree permit must be obtained to remove any significant tree, generally defined as six inches or larger in diameter.

The Focus Group identified several tree issues which were discussed at the public meeting on July 26, 2006 at Third Place Commons; they included 1) The Forested Character of LFP, 2) What is a significant tree, 3) The Level I Tree Permit, 4) The Level II Tree Permit, 5) Tree replanting requirements, and 6) Penalties for unauthorized tree removal.

The overall consensus from the Public Meeting was that there is a widely held view that Lake Forest Park is losing its valuable tree cover. The size and species of trees matters when changes to the ordinance are considered. There is a need to protect stands or groups of trees. People support increased penalties for unauthorized tree removal. There is support for increased replanting requirements.

Public input is vital to help identify what issues regarding trees are important to the people of Lake Forest Park. The Task Force is planning another public meeting on Wednesday, October 25, 2006 at the Brookside Elementary School gym. Please don't wait for the public meeting; send your comments to forest@cityofflp.com.

What's new in our Stream Basins?

This year's focus is on the in-stream health of Brookside Creek. Andreas Kammereck, P.E., a geomorphologist, of Golder Associates Inc., and Brian Bodenbach, of Biosphere Company, are going to be working on analyzing the stream to determine the effect which erosion and subsequent downstream sedimentation has in the creek and its tributaries, Sheridan and Hillside Creeks. The impact downstream in McAleer Creek from conditions in the Brookside drainage basin will also be studied.

Attempts to control flow velocity and to stabilize sloughing slopes are two potential tasks which may come to light when the stream analysis is completed.

Some data gathering will be handled by volunteers, especially in situation which involve delving into public records and monitoring variations in the streams related to seasonal or storm impact.

The Foundation is seeking another year of extension to the King County Water and Land Resources' WaterWorks grant to complete this study.

In another project, the Cities of Shoreline and

Lake Forest Park are working together to tame the velocity of storm water coming from street runoff into upper Brookside Creek in the vicinity of the Grace Cole Nature Park. This work should reduce some of the sediment washing into upper Brookside Creek, since it will dissipate and slow the flow into the creek. It should also reduce the "flash" effect from heavy rainstorms upon Brookside and McAleer Creeks.

To tame stream velocity and to improve conditions for fish passage, the Adopt-a-Stream organization has been installing logs along the banks of Lyon Creek and placing baffles in culverts. Vegetation in many places along the creeks has been enhanced by that organization, as well.

Meanwhile the faithful volunteer corps of Lake Forest Park's StreamKeepers continues to perform quarterly testing of stream chemistry and annual sampling of macro-invertebrates, upon which fish depend for food.

As stream conditions improve, we hope the salmon, trout and other inhabitants will find our streams more suitable for spawning and rearing.



We would like to keep you informed of occasional items of interest. Please help us keep our mailing costs low by sending us your email address to info@lfpsf.org.

NORTH CASCADES SUMMER YOUTH ADVENTURE

Nothing you do for children is ever wasted.

--Garrison Keillor

What if everyone just settled for average? What if nobody raised the bar? What if everyone decided to wait and let someone else do it first? This spring 17 freshman and sophomore students from Shorecrest High School turned their "what ifs" into "what's next" when they applied for and were chosen to attend one of two exciting 10-day outdoor wilderness camps exploring North Cascades National Park. No experience was necessary, scholarships covered all expenses (travel, food, lodging, equipment and instruction) and they earned community service hours! Led by enthusiastic and experienced naturalists and wilderness guides, these teenagers explored Ross Lake by canoe, experiencing stunning views, fantastic hikes, blue-green water, abundant wildlife sightings and old growth forests. They participated in the restoration of hiking trails, campsites and native plant sites. They learned wilderness safety skills, how to maneuver a canoe, work with a partner, read maps, and preserve the back-country while learning more about themselves and others. Everyone made it to the top of 6,000 foot Desolation Peak. They laughed around the campfire, set up their own tents, cooked their own meals and even cleaned up after themselves. They got acquainted with the native flora and fauna and learned about conservation, stewardship, early Native life, the history of the region and Ice Age geology. Moments of reflection and beauty were captured with their cameras and in their journals so they could "tell about their adventure when they got back home." Some of their comments include:

- "I can't forget learning first about LEAVE NO TRACE, where you must always think before you do something."
- "The completion of the service work was a wondrous accomplishment, working extremely hard on the last day and building the path all by myself."
- "My favorite day was when we climbed Desolation Peak and seeing the amazing view, I wasn't sure I could make it all the way."
- "Devil's Creek was so serene, its gushing waters cascading towards us, echoing in the canyon. Looking up in the sky was magical, bright blue sky & towering trees."
- "I want to remember all the laughs and the power I got from being in this place and making my own choices. I have come so far in 10 days."
- "My favorite service day was when my team built a new tent pad and fire pit and put in a new set of trail markers. At the end of that day I was very dirty and tired, but I had the satisfying feeling in me about the service I had provided to the Park and the rest of the world."
- "I want to tell my Dad that I want to go backpacking and to see if I could do something with this experience and do something with my senior project."

Then, on the last weekend of September, the students had a chance to return to Ross Lake with their family and several members of the Stewardship Foundation to show them the spirited waterfalls, fern-draped canyons and alpine horizons they enjoyed. They traveled aboard an open-decked boat for this adventure. This 10-day outdoor program was sponsored by the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, North Cascades Institute, Student Conservation Association in partnership with the Stewardship Foundation who raised funds during our annual auction. Now that these confident and energetic youth are back home they will have opportunities to become active stewards of our natural resources in Lake Forest Park. Volunteering with StreamKeepers, working on re-vegetation and restoration projects, taking plant inventories at the Cole Nature Park, and tackling the local and regional conservation and restoration issues will call them to action. And thanks to strong board leadership, good partners and widespread support the Stewardship Foundation is poised to do the same. One of our annual goals is to provide this wilderness experience to our high school students. We invite you to help us turn these "what ifs" into "what's next."

Preparing Comments on A Reasonable Use Application

Sometimes, land use regulations such as restrictions on building in or near a sensitive area, combined with the specific properties of a given lot, make it impossible for a landowner to use the land for the purpose for which it is zoned. There is a process called a Reasonable Use Exemption (RUE) which allows a landowner to petition the City in order to be granted an exemption from specific regulations, in order to make use of the land. Part of the process of an RUE is a public comment period, in which any concerned citizen can submit written comments regarding the proposal. The City is required by law to take these comments under consideration; we're fortunate to live in a City where the City takes this requirement quite seriously, and experience has shown that effective public comments can have significant impact on the results of the RUE process.

The Stewardship Foundation has acquired a fair amount of experience in submitting comments for RUEs; we'd like to pass along to you some information and suggestions on how you can submit effective public comments. "I've gathered this information while reviewing numerous reasonable use exemption applications, variance applications, subdivision applications, and conditional use applications", said Board member Steve Plusch. "I've done my best to make sure the suggestions that I've included are correct. The LFP municipal code and information contained in the various application forms are the legal documents that cover this type of application."

1. Review the information contained on the City's "Public Notice" for the project. Note the deadline for submitting comments; ensure that your comments are submitted several days before that date (if necessary, you can submit comments right up to the deadline, but it is easier on the staff if you get them in early); a large volume of documents submitted at the last meeting won't make the Hearing Examiner happy and will probably cause the public hearing to be delayed; you really want to make it easy for the Hearing Examiner!). If you need additional information that the City cannot provide in time to complete your comments, request an extension of the comment period.

2. Enter the parcel number, contained on the public notice, into the King County Parcel Viewer to get

a map of the site and information related to ownership.

http://www.metrokc.gov/gis/mappointal/PViewer_main.htm

In the lower left corner on the page containing the map, you will find links to

- Property Report
- Districts Report
- DDES Permits (usually not relevant)

Click these links and review the associated information.

A more detailed map can be obtained using the "iMap" feature.

3. Review the information that the applicant supplied on the Reasonable Use Application. Look for completeness and consistency. It is best if you can obtain information from neighbors or others with direct knowledge of the land affected by the application to verify the information that the applicant submitted. Don't rely on the accuracy of the information provided by the applicant; it can be incomplete and contain errors.

4. Do an initial review of the site plan, geotechnical report, habitat analysis (if applicable), vegetation and tree management plans, mitigation plans, etc. carefully. Remember, the applicant hired someone to do the survey, the topographic map, the geotechnical report, and other reports. Within professional limits, you can expect this data to favor the applicant; not the surrounding property owners. (see detailed site plan analysis).

5. If possible put together a group of concerned citizens to discuss how to respond to the application. It may be necessary to obtain funds for an independent survey, geotechnical report, etc. You will want to think about how you might expect to affect the application if you expend funds for independent reports. Depending on the accuracy of the applicant's documents, independent reports may not affect the outcome of the reasonable use determination.

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6. Consult the City's sensitive area map to determine how the site is affected by them.

7. You will need to understand what elements of the proposed project can be challenged, commented upon, during the reasonable use process. They are:

- a. Incursion into sensitive areas and their associated buffers.
 - i. Steep slopes
 - ii. Wetlands
 - iii. Streams
 - iv. Seismic, etc. (no buffers required for seismic areas; additional geotechnical engineering required to ensure stability)

If you have reason to believe one of these features exists on the site, do not rely on the Sensitive Area Maps; they are a good start, but may be incomplete.

- b. Building setbacks (side yard, front yard, and rear yard).

8. You may want to comment on additional items such as, land clearing and grading, tree removal, items contained in the building permit, etc. but make sure you recognize and annotate these comments in your comment letters so the hearing examiner understands that you realize these comments do not pertain to the Reasonable Use Application. This will save you and the Hearing Examiner a lot of work. If you are unclear about whether something pertains or does not, consult with the Planning Staff. If you are still unsure, include the comments anyway.

9. Do a detailed review of the Site Plan; it must meet the following requirements (City may waive some requirements if they are not relevant; however, if a requirement has been waived that you believe is relevant, discuss this with the Planning Staff and submit a written request that it be required):

A site-plan that must be accurate, legible and drawn to scale (a recent survey may be required) that provides the following:

- a. The existing dimensions and lot size, proposed dimensions and lot size.
- b. Identify adjacent streets, existing and proposed access.
- c. Identify existing and proposed structures and

distances to property lines.

- d. Location of proposed alterations or improvements.
- e. Location of any sensitive areas on or near the site.
- f. Location of any open space or preservation areas.
- g. Location of any significant trees (6" diameter or greater)
- h. If possible, locate drainage channels, sewer and water lines.
- i. Identify existing and proposed easements.
- j. Elevation plans, if applicable.

Note: If one or more of these are missing, it is not cause for rejecting the application; the applicant may be required to submit them before the application is considered complete.

10. Review the preliminary drainage plan if required.

11. The applicant should be asking for the "minimum relief" necessary to obtain reasonable economic use of the property. The applicant will almost always ask for more (larger house than neighboring residences, reduction of setbacks beyond the minimum necessary, etc.); it is up to the Hearing Examiner to determine what is "reasonable" according to the Reasonable Use Criteria. Your comments, the more specific the better, can have a significant impact on the Hearing Examiner's decision. Review the criteria carefully to determine if you agree with the applicant's responses; if you don't agree, prepare specific comments with factual supporting information, to counter the applicant's assertions. These criteria are as follows:

- a. Application of the requirements of Chapter 16.16 of the Lake Forest Park Municipal Code will deny all reasonable use of the property.
- b. There is no other reasonable economic use with less impact on the sensitive area.
- c. The proposed development does not pose an unreasonable threat to the public health, safety, or welfare, on or off the proposed site and is consistent with the general purposes of this chapter and the comprehensive plan.

Remember: Your evaluation is likely to differ from the applicant's; insure that you provide factual sup-

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porting data.

12. If you are unsure about any of the information contained in the application or you believe that there is information missing, contact the Planning Staff. Ask for an extension of the comment period if necessary.

13. Encourage as many people to attend the Public Hearing as possible. Listen as the Hearing Examiner reviews the exhibits. If you submitted a comment letter, it should be listed as an exhibit. If you don't hear your letter has been assigned an Exhibit number, have a copy with you that you can provide directly to the Hearing Examiner. You can offer additional comments at this time, but it is better if you submit the information before the end of the comment period. Do not read a comment letter that has already been submitted. The Hearing Examiner is very thorough and reads all submissions carefully. If you are unsure, you can just say that you have submitted a letter.

SCHOOLYARD HABITAT PROJECT AT LFP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

As part of the certification of Lake Forest Park by the National Wildlife Federation, Lake Forest Park Elementary School began an environmental awareness and educational program that encouraged participation from students, parents, teachers, administration and support staff. All levels of participants were encouraged in some manner to begin to become familiar with the native plants of the Pacific Northwest and native animals. Bulletin boards, mystery plant identification contests, work parties for clean-up, spreading mulch, planning new areas, and painting habitat murals were all avenues of active help and learning.

Teachers and students were asked to look at the connection between the needs of animals (food, water, cover and a place to raise their young) and the plants (trees, shrubs and ground cover). In order to accomplish awareness, teachers were asked to look at resources from the National Wildlife Federation and attend a workshop lead by three guest speakers. Greg Armstrong from LFP Birds Unlimited, Gretchen Muller from the National Wildlife Federation and Roberta McDaris-Long, the guest artist, supplied the necessary leadership for this workshop. Students were then lead by teachers to help in different ways to create six different stations on the school grounds that emphasized different points of focus. The six stations were given titles of Butterfly Garden, Wetlands, East Wall Murals (four distinct habitats painted by fifth grade students), The Courtyard, Tiered Gardens (student gardening and experimentation) and Peace Gardens. All these stations were later awarded Schoolyard Habitat signs that identify these areas of learning and interest.

The success of the awareness campaign for native plants and animals was celebrated by the whole school in late June with all participants being recognized for their contributions also included fourth and sixth grade student tour guides, student interpreters for the Butterfly Garden, a fourth grade tour guide leader to show identified invasive plants and music at the Peace Garden. Students joined in on the celebration by either listening to short presentations at a station or presenting their unrehearsed explanations of their work.

It is the hope of the project leaders to continue the native plant project this coming school year by asking families to donate and help plant native trees, shrubs and ground cover while asking the administration to support continued participation and learning at all established learning areas while maintaining past native plantings and beds. The PTA has generously volunteered to help maintain past successful learning areas.

Project leaders express and want to express their sincere thanks and gratitude for all of the many hours, tools, hard work and wonderful ideas donated throughout the project!



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Send inquiries and address data to:
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AUCTION ALERT

Our annual Benefit Dinner and Auction is being rescheduled for early next Spring. When the details have been finalized we will send you a "SAVE THE DATE" postcard so you can note your calendar, bring your friends and join us at the Nile Shrine Center for an evening of celebration with delicious food, scrumptious desserts, exciting auctions and live music.

**We look forward to having you join
us at the Auction!**

**LFP Stewardship Foundation
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