



How did the Land Trust publish a book?

Organizing a community project

Bob Keller, *Whatcom Places* Editor

To celebrate the diverse beauty of Whatcom County and to show how thoughtful stewardship can shape our future, the WLT Board of Directors approved a book publishing project in January of 1996.

Two months later a publication committee met for the first time.

Last March, one year later, the committee met for the final time as *Whatcom Places* headed to the printer.

Few books, no matter how simple, move at this speed from conception to finished product. And our local effort was not simple, involving the cooperation of an editor, graphic designer, six writers, seventeen photographers, and several dozen financial contributors.

How did this happen? I claim credit for two smart decisions: picking the book committee members and selecting the designer. Most other matters just seemed to fall into place.

The book committee began with an organizing miracle: after one hour of phoning, *everyone* asked to serve on this committee had said yes!

Individuals were chosen for special expertise and dependability. Their willingness to pitch in, their hard work and new ideas, their connections and advice made this committee exceptional.

Dave Peebles, former Sehome High School

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This view looking south down Ross Lake is one of the scenes featured in *Whatcom Places*. (Photo: Grant Myers)

Inside:

- More photos and quotes from *Whatcom Places*
- Read about our youngest fund-raisers
- Volunteers needed for WLT projects

Open space can bring economic benefits

Gordon Scott and Sheri Emerson

When the Whatcom Land Trust accepts land or easement donations, we are often asked about the impact of conservation on the county tax base. There is a common belief that undeveloped land, even if nice to look at, is not economically productive and it only carries its weight in the local tax base after it is developed.

But when comparing generated tax revenues to the costs of providing services, researchers have found that open space lands generate more tax dollars per acre than they consume in services.

More and more communities are discovering open space has many economic benefits.

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Memorials and gifts in honor of someone special

Whatcom County Parks Department is now offering a way to honor someone very special.

Benches or picnic tables may be purchased and placed in a County Park in honor or memory of someone you know. Benches cost between \$800 and \$1,000 and picnic tables cost \$1,200 to \$1,800. This price includes the installation and a plaque naming the person honored.

If you are interested in this program, contact Larry Simkins, Whatcom County Parks Department, 733-2900.

See you at the NW Washington Fair!

Whatcom Land Trust has reserved a booth at the Northwest Washington Fair in Lynden, August 11-16. We're looking forward to sharing our land conservation goals at such a well-attended event.

If you can volunteer for a few hours in our booth, please call the WLT office, 650-9470.

Thanks to...

We are always grateful to folks in this community who lend us a helping hand. Many thanks to **Adoline Brown and staff at Chicago Title Insurance Company, Wade and Tonie Marlow** for hosting the "Book Debut Party" at the **Blue Horse Gallery**, (and putting together a beautiful show featuring photographers from the book), the reliable volunteers at **Washington Square** who help with our newsletter mailings, especially **Maxine Sorenson and Del Hedberg, Sid and Aline Wanne** for hosting a book sponsor appreciation dinner and **Wilson Engineering** for donating work on the Squires Lake project.

New book is on the internet

Special thanks to **Dick Carlson** for setting up a *Whatcom Places* web site. Information about the book and the Land Trust can be found at www.institute.org/whatcom.

DNR goes on-line

Owners of nonindustrial forestland will now be able to get the latest stewardship information and questions answered on the Department of Natural Resources' "Internet Home Page." The address is: <http://www.wa.gov/dnr/htdocs/rp/rp.html>

Land Trust needs your help

WLT is looking for volunteers to fill specific needs in our organization. Please call 650-9470, if you can help with one of these projects:

1. Manage the distribution of *Whatcom Places*, (20 hrs./month).
2. Organize a film series, (20-30 hrs./total).
3. Manage the speakers bureau, (1-2 hrs./week).

teacher, helped with writing and photos. **Ann Yow** is a professional photo-journalist. **Duane Sweeney** owns a marketing company in Bellingham and is a fount of fresh ideas. **Tom Wood** brought the eye of talented landscape artist. **Wendy Walker** of Blaine teaches environmental education at Huxley College

and **Patty Nelson** taught the same subject in the Bellingham schools. **Chuck Robinson**, is co-owner of Village Books and an intimate of the publishing world, **Steve Brinn**, not on the committee, proved a great confidence builder and help in fund-raising.



Pat Karlberg and Aline Wanne admire book photos during the Whatcom Places reception at the Blue Horse Gallery, May 15. (Photo: Julie Carpenter).

During the summer I selected a graphic designer, **Roderick Burton**. Rod became an invaluable member of our group. Without him, we would still be shuffling through hundreds of photos and preparing for another year of committee meetings. A local copy

editor has called Rod "a design genius," a view enthusiastically endorsed by the committee.

Much of the rest was luck and good will. Photographers such as **Mark Bergsma, Lee Mann and Tore Oftness** enthusiastically donated their work from the start. The photo mix from big names like **Tim Fitzharris, Bob and Ira Spring** and less well-known but highly skilled Whatcom artists like **Sharon Granger, Jon Brunk, Richard Williams, Mark Turner, Grant Myers, Gene Davis, Fredrick Sears, Rod del Pozo** and others brought a diverse visual quality.

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The mission of the Whatcom Land Trust is to preserve and protect unique natural, scenic, agricultural and open space land in Whatcom County through acquisition of perpetual conservation easements or other land interest that insure the protection of the resource value.

Whatcom Land Trust is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization working for voluntary land conservation in Whatcom County. The Steward is published three times each year by the WLT. Your comments are welcomed. Complimentary copies are available by calling the Land Trust office, 650-9470.

Newsletter Committee Chair Chris Moench

Contributors Chris Moench, Dick Beardsley, Bob Keller, Gordon Scott, Pat Karlberg, Julie Carpenter, Sheri Emerson

Desktop Publishing Sheri Emerson

Our instinct to stay local for printing also proved correct. Cooperation by **Scott Wheeler at Premier Graphics, Brett Baunton at Digital Photo Imaging, and Rod Burton** explains in part why this book appeared ahead of schedule and why it is so beautiful.

Community supports "a good idea"

Finally, there was financial support. The Land Trust, as you know, is a small, local, non-profit, volunteer organization with limited funds. It could not underwrite this project, so we turned to the community and asked people to support a good idea.

Business contributors to an environmental program testify to the depth of pride in and concern for this place. The list of donors and volunteers may be the most telling statement in *Whatcom Places*. (See a complete list of sponsors on page 4.)

The most astounding fund-raising, however, was done by **A. J. Friedman**, a Whatcom Middle School 6th grader who, on his own initiative, collected \$186 from the general public by sitting at a table outside Haggen's Meridian store on two cold winter days. (See story on back page.)

Will this book meet our goals?

The Land Trust's goals for *Whatcom Places* are to honor our natural landscape, to instill a sense of pride and geographic belonging, to

inspire a commitment toward A. J. Friedman's generation, to encourage careful reflection about where our fast-growing community is headed and to raise awareness of WLT and the land stewardship tools we offer.

This is a lofty agenda, but the process of publishing this book shows what committed people, given an opportunity, can do in a short time.

And besides, we believe that this book conclusively proves that Whatcom County deserves lofty environmental goals.

Where can you buy a copy?

Whatcom Places is available at many retail outlets in the county. Here are a few:

Chuckanut Gallery, Mark Bergsma Studio, WWU Bookstore, Community Food Co-op, Village Books, Base Camp, The Great Adventure, Whatcom Museum Giftshop, Tourist & Convention Center, Brown and Cole Stores, Ferndale and Blaine; Stremler Boekhandel, Lynden; Dodson's IGA, Nugents Corner; Everybody's Store, Van Zandt; Maple Fuels of Maple Falls.

In Skagit County: Scotts Bookstore, Mt. Vernon.

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." Whatcom County is vibrant. A realtor, an unemployed grant from Mexico, or a tree-lined parkway with a water view cherished by all is a matter of opinion and partially true. At times we come together in the beauty of a summer sunset from Skagit Baker on a cold winter day. A trick in building community from our differences and common visions."



People like you make it happen

Look into the leathery smile of Herman Miller on page 84 of *Whatcom Places*, and the beaming face of 16-year-old Kelsey Jack on page 63. Miller's 160-acre farm is the first property protected through a Land Trust conservation easement. The wooded 40 acres on which Kelsey's family lives is one of the most recent.

More than 4,000 acres of special places in Whatcom County have been protected to date. People like you help make it happen. The Land Trust relies upon private contributions. Send a contribution and join today.

Encourage a friend to join, too.

Enclosed is my membership contribution: \$25 Supporter \$50 Friend \$100 Donor \$250 Sponsor Other
 I've included the names of friends who may be interested in becoming a member. You can use my name when contacting them.

Name (s) _____ Business _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Please make your check payable to Whatcom Land Trust. Whatcom Land Trust is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization and donations are tax deductible.

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*Along with beautiful
 landscapes,
 Whatcom Places
 features some
 familiar street scenes
 and people who live
 here. (Above:
 Juanita Jefferson
 photo by Ann Yow;
 Left: Fairhaven
 photo by M.
 Rodrigo del Pozo)*



With appreciation to the book sponsors...

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 Whatcom Community Foundation
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Local support for *Whatcom Places* was overwhelming.

It not only allowed us to produce a book even bigger (and better) than originally planned, but is a powerful statement of how much people care about this community. Here is what some sponsors said about the project.

*"We've been looking for a way to support the Land Trust for a couple of years and this book seemed to be a good opportunity to do that. We especially liked the idea that contributions were limited, making this a community-sponsored project and not something funded by just one or two major corporations," observed **Jerry Eklund, Tosco Refinery, Ferndale.** "And the final product is even better than promised!" he added.*

*"When we read the Whatcom Land Trust mission statement, and saw the names of the people on the managing board who are dedicated to the mission statement, Pat and I were happy to be a part of this project," commented **Fielding Formway.***

*"Bob Keller came to me last year and asked for our support on this project," said **Bob Morse, Morse Hardware Company.** "Since this was different than anything we had supported previously, I discussed the project with the shareholders of our company. The shareholders absolutely endorsed the idea and we were happy to add our support for the book."*

Open space

(Continued from page 1)

"What many people don't realize is that residential development does not provide sufficient tax revenue to support itself. Open space is generally the most cost-effective land there is, supplying more tax money than it requires," Dale Bonar, Jefferson Land Trust (Port Townsend) recently explained.

Open space provides economic advantage

Cost-benefit studies conducted by the American Farmland Trust in ten communities around the country found that, on average, for every tax dollar generated by land in conservation status, the same property used only 29 cents worth of public services. Land in commercial or industrial use cost 30 cents in services for every tax dollar generated. On residential land use, for every dollar of tax revenue collected, the public spent \$1.16 to provide services. (*Economic Benefits of Land Protection, Land Trust Alliance*)

In summary: open space lands actually provide a tax revenue surplus that subsidizes other land uses, especially residential development.

Other economic benefits of conserving lands also should be noted: open space tends to increase the value of surrounding properties; may provide significant public benefits in terms of community health and welfare.

Increased property value can result from open space

Property adjacent to protected open-space land is often considered more valuable than similar property located elsewhere. Such amenities are used as selling points by the real estate industry.

A recent survey in the *Bellingham Herald* indicated a significantly higher local market value for land with waterfront, water and mountain views. In Boulder, Colorado, a study of the impacts of greenbelts on neighborhood property revealed the aggregate property value for one neighborhood was about \$5.4 million dollars higher than without a greenbelt.

Home buyers seem willing to pay for

nearby open space. This increase in property value results in increased revenues for local governments.

Other benefits to the local community

Open space lands can provide significant public benefits that may not directly result in tax dollars. Scenic vistas, protection of stream and river shorelines, preservation of wildlife habitats, and conservation of historic buildings and sites cannot be replaced if lost, and thus are priceless in a market economy. Extinction of species, loss of historic structures, or pollution of ground water aquifers are examples of irreplaceable community assets.

While land conservation clearly has a net positive impact on community tax budgets, non-market attributes of open space may be the biggest benefit land trusts provide. Working to maintain Whatcom County as a place of forests, farms, fish streams and native northwest habitat gives all of us a higher quality of life.

Open space lands actually provide a tax revenue surplus that subsidizes other land uses, especially, residential development.

**Research in cities across
America has revealed
that money does in fact
grow on trees.**



Parks and open spaces contribute to a flourishing economy and strong tax base. Research by the Trust for Public Land and others show that parks and open space are high on the list of what makes people want to live, work, play, shop, and visit an area. Access to parks, recreation, and natural areas was noted as a key factor in companies' decisions to expand and relocate their operations. (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

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Youngest fund-raisers honored by Land Trust



A.J. Friedman shakes hands with WLT President Gordon Scott after he and Darren Johnson (second from left) presented a cash donation to WLT Treasurer Hilda Bajema. (Photo: Chris Moench.)

Listed among the names of the sponsors of *Whatcom Places* are three middle school students: **A. J. Friedman, Darren Johnson, and Hadley Youngberg.**

As part of the Whatcom Middle School curriculum, students participated in a project called The Teen Action Plan (TAP). Following a presentation to their class by WLT Board Member Bob Keller, these students chose the Land Trust for their TAP project. They specifically chose to work on fund-raising for the book project.

While *Whatcom Places* was still being designed and before anyone knew how the final version would turn out, the students set up a table

at Haggen's store on Meridian Street and convinced passersby to donate toward the project. They brought their earnings to the March Board meeting.

"It is our pleasure to present to the board of directors \$186. We hope it will help the Whatcom Land Trust reach its goals," A. J. said as he handed the contribution to Treasurer Hilda Bajema.

The Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution in appreciation of the students' initiative on behalf of the Trust.

Book bulk-sale discounts available from Land Trust office



Whatcom Places can be purchased in bulk from the WLT office.

Discounts for paper cover copies ordered in bulk are:

6 or more books 5% discount

12 or more books 10% discount

24 or more books 20% discount

Full case (44 books) 30% discount

Please call the Land Trust office, 650-9470, for more information.



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