

THE MILLER BAY GUARDIAN

Volume 10, Issue 1

November 2009

Sorely Missed



Virginia Cowling died November 14, 2008 at the age of 92. She served on the FMB Board for many years and was an inspiration to everyone she met.

Virginia was a powerful advocate for the environment and it was at her urging that FMB began the Cowling Creek Project. It's success doubled the acreage that Virginia had already donated to the Great Peninsula Conservancy as a permanent preserve.

When the Cowling Creek

Project began, Cowling Creek and North Cowling Creek were unnamed. At the time, Virginia resisted all our efforts to name them in her honor. Although she deserved the recognition, she wanted the emphasis to be on saving natural places for future generations, not individual egos.

So now we are very happy to have the honor of naming the creeks and the forest preserve in her memory. Come take a walk through her beloved forest. That's what she wanted us to do. - Nancy D'Archangel FMB Secretary

Paul Dorn

From the President

I'm honored to work with the energetic and passionate FOMBies – volunteers and board members alike. Our unique local focus, helping conserve and preserve the wonderful watersheds flowing into the Miller Bay estuary, adds to other efforts to clean up Puget Sound. It's a daunting enough local challenge as everywhere we look we see possible projects: DNR land to protect off Gundersen Road; mapping the actual location Cowling Creek and all the tributaries of Miller Bay (never been done); various education efforts where we can team with the experts to help reduce our individual footprint in the watershed and on the Bay; and so on.

We have achieved a lot of success and enjoy close relationships with the Great Peninsula Conservancy, the Suquamish Tribe, and local community organizations, but we especially welcome fresh visions and partnerships. FMB is working with Olympic Outdoor Center on weekend wildlife and fish viewing kayak trips on Miller Bay.

FMB also helps lead Olympic Community College's annual "Life on the Edge" biology class field days learning about the relationship of the forest to Cowling Creek and using beach seines to observe the underwater inhabitants of Miller Bay.

FMB assists Suquamish Elementary students on their annual trip to Cowling Creek to release the chum fry they have raised at school. We would like to assist Stillwaters

Education Center expand their program to include our watershed. A new and exciting project we are participating in is sampling our local surf smelt spawning beaches to help researchers answer the question – are surf smelt populations distinctly local, or one big family?

There are many ways you can participate, whether trail building, assisting a class, beach seining, or just maintaining your membership knowing that your money goes to support our vision. As a FOMBie, you are helping protect the habitat that supports the nesting eagle and osprey, the paths the black bear take from the hill sides to the creek to grab a salmon meal, and the places where the river otter play. We're working toward the time when we can all once again eat the clams on Clam Island and see the native Olympia oysters abundantly return to the Bay. Thank you so much for your support and caring.



Photo by Wes Nicholson

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Dick & Nancy D'Archangel

THE MILLER BAY GUARDIAN is the newsletter of FRIENDS OF MILLER BAY. P.O. Box 37, Suquamish, WA 98370. Submissions from readers are welcome. We reserve the right to edit due to space, grammar or legal reasons. Email submissions to darchangel@embarqmail.com, or mail to the above address. Opinions expressed herein are those of the credited writers and do not necessarily represent the official position of Friends of Miller Bay.

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Status Report

Cowling Creek Project

By Dick D'Archangel, FMB Board Member

The Cowling Creek Project focused the attention of our organization and the community on a very worthwhile goal, the protection from future development of 18 acres of critical habitat in the Miller Bay watershed. With the successful completion of this project in November 2007, title to the land was transferred to the Great Peninsula Conservancy.

The deed to the property specifies the following:

"This conveyance to Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC) and its successors is made

upon the express condition that the real estate be maintained and operated as a nature preserve subject to specific equitable restrictions set out herein which shall be enforceable by FRIENDS OF MILLER BAY."

The deed specifically prohibits these activities:

1. Subdivision and development.
2. Commercial or industrial use.
3. Structures, except as are specifically allowed herein.
4. Commercial logging and any other removal of trees or vegetation except as may be required for reasons of safety, for prevention of the incursion of destructive or non-native species, or for trail construction and maintenance.
5. Fields for football, baseball, soccer, or similar sports.
6. Use by motorized vehicles, except as may be needed for access for the disabled, for emergencies, for allowed construction, for maintenance, or for stewardship.
7. Parking lots in excess of one parking area with a permeable surface for not more than three vehicles to provide for pedestrian access.
8. Bicycles along trails except any trail along the eastern border of the property which would provide connections with other community bicycle and pedestrian trail systems.
9. Use of the property by domestic animals (pets).

As a nature preserve, this land should be a refuge for native plants and animals. This implies the need to remove plants that compete with native vegetation and to encourage domestic animals to go elsewhere. Man-made structures contributing to soil erosion (specifically, failing culverts) should be removed.


Beyond protection, many compatible uses of the property should be promoted. Community access for recreational and educational purposes is a priority.

Friends of Miller Bay will focus on these new goals in the coming years. We look forward to the same community support that made Cowling Creek Project a success.



Photo credit: David Caley

"To conserve and preserve the waters, wetlands, wildlife habitat, timberlands, undeveloped land, and scenic space in the areas around or near Miller Bay, Washington." - Friends of Miller Bay Mission Statement



FRIENDS OF MILLER BAY

Cordially Invite You
to their

ANNUAL MEETING

Featured Speaker:

JOHN WILLETT

Kitsap Trails Association Vice President

***NORTH KITSAP
AND REGIONAL
TRAILS***

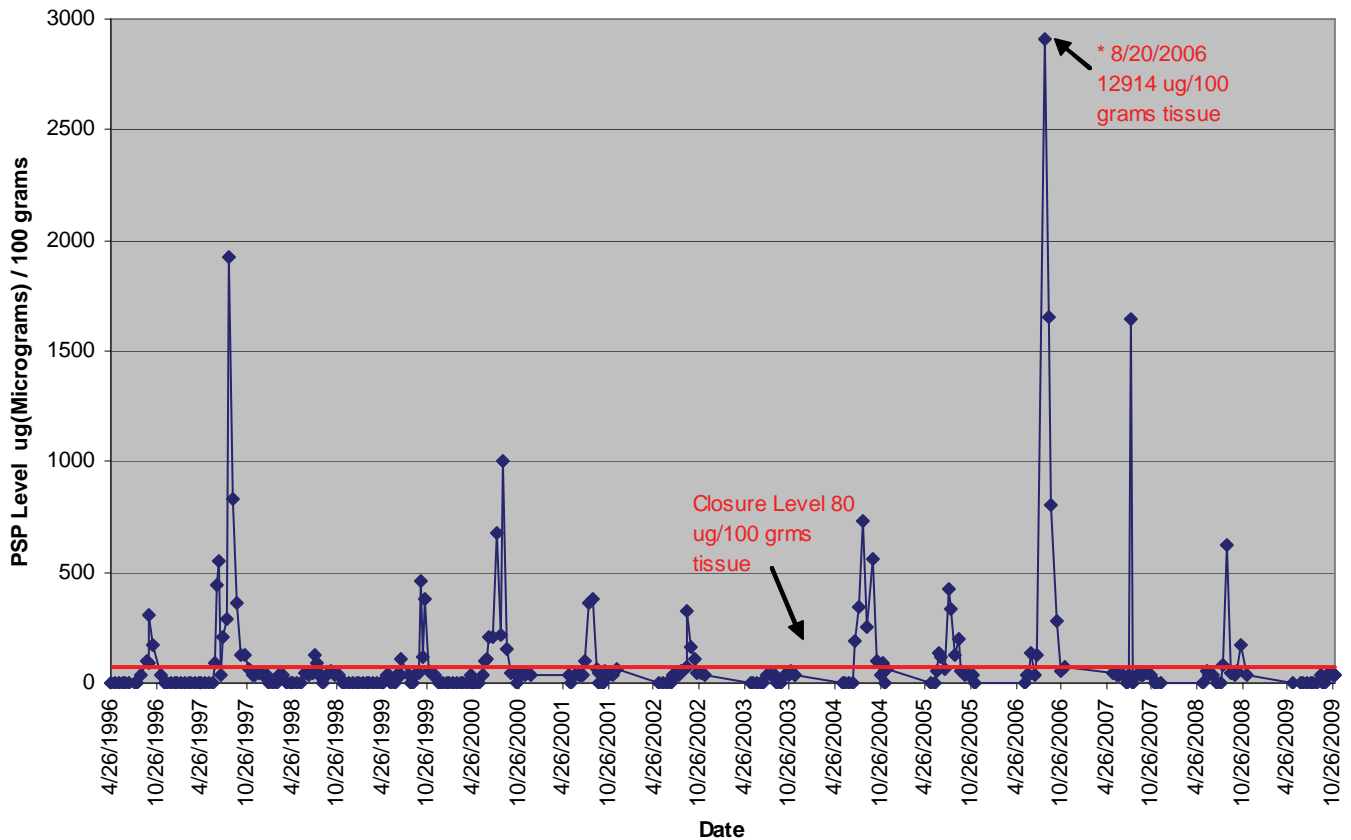
The meeting will be held at the

COWLING CREEK CENTER

20325 Miller Bay Rd NE

Wed, Nov. 18 at 7:00 P.M.

PSP Result 1996 - 2009



Red Tide

PSP Levels in Miller Bay

FMB volunteers supply the Kitsap County Health District with Miller Bay blue mussels for the county's Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning prevention program. Since April 26, 1996, 273 samples have been collected and tested.

The purpose of program is warn shell fish collectors when levels of organisms that cause PSP are high enough to be a danger to human health. The above table shows the level of PSP toxin measured on the dates shown on the horizontal axis. The solid line at 80 micrograms of toxin per 100 grams of sample, is the closure level.

The record shows an annual peak in late summer of almost every year. It is interesting to note that in the last four years both the highest (2006) and lowest (2009) peak levels have occurred.

North Urban Road End

Thanks to the work of the Suquamish Citizens Advisory Committee, the North Urban Street road end is officially open to the public. You can access Cowling Creek Forest Preserve trails from this road end. It provides a short and scenic route from N. Urban to Miller Bay Road. A map of the trails is available by request from Dick D'Archangel. Email him at darchangel@embarqmail.com

New Land Trust Activity

By John Nelson FMB Board Member

In 1998, the Indianola Land Trust (ILT) started raising funds to preserve the woodland and waterfront property owned by the Bloedel Foundation. That effort was successful, with the County taking ownership of both the 77-acre woodland and 3.5-acre waterfront parcels.

The ILT was granted a conservation easement on the property. The ILT then merged with the Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC), so the conservation easement is now held by the GPC.

The two parcels are separated by a 7.5 acre piece stretching west from the waterfront property up the hill to the woodland property. This land has been held by the Volpe family, and Peter Volpe, the current owner, is willing to sell it at the appraised value..

A "development committee" has been formed to create a plan to purchase the property. The Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC) will administer the activity to secure a grant and raise funds to match that grant. A plan to accomplish this goal is in the process now and the grant application and fund-raising will be underway soon. For more information about this project, and how you can be involved in it, call John Nelson at 297-3160 or the GPC office at (360) 373-3500.

Attention Indianolians

Join Friends of Miller Bay and make a donation to the Cowling Creek Forest Preserve.

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Tel. _____

FOMB Memberships (Make check to FOMB)

- I include \$25 for a one-year membership.
- I include \$100 for a one year Conserving Membership
- I include a \$ _____ gift.

Please mail this form and your check to Friends of Miller Bay, Box 37, Suquamish, WA 98392

Cowling Creek Forest Preserve Donations (Make check to GPC/CCFP)

- I would like to donate _____ to the Cowling Creek Forest Preserve.
- Please contact me about a gift of securities.

Call the GPC office (360 373-3500) for a credit card donation .

- Put me on your email list (no membership required!).**

Memories of Miller Bay

By Sharon Nichols FMB Vice President

Sid and Edna Price brought their three daughters, Doris Jean, Elizabeth, and Sharon, to Miller Bay about 1947. Sid's brother, Lloyd Price and his wife Mayme, had bought 18 acres of waterfront land back in the Bay on the Suquamish side. Lloyd needed his brother's help to buy the land and for Sid's down payment , he was given a strip of land with a small beach on it.

Sid and Edna Price and their girls would pack up on a Friday nights and take their double ender cruiser the "Alberti" from Seattle's Lake Union, through the locks, and across the sound to the " Hole" in Miller Bay. The "Hole" is the deep part of the Bay that does not go dry when the tide goes out. The "Alberti" was anchored in the "Hole" and the family would row to the property back in the Bay. Mayme said, "I could always tell when they were coming because you could hear Sharon crying way before they got here." I don't remember crying as I was about four years old at the time, but I do remember it was cold and I was tired.

One day in about 1949, neighbors came running down the Indianola road and yelled across to us, "Your boat is burning." We all ran wildly down the beach to see flames poring out of the boat's chimney. My Dad was crying "My boat." My Mom was yelling,

"Sid, my purse, get my purse." I was illogically hollering, "My library books. Get my library books." My poor father was so harassed and worried, he bor-

rowed a row boat from a eighbor and started rowing out to the cruiser. He was about 100 feet from it, when the cruiser blew up. I almost lost my dear father at that moment, just because of our silly concerns about out possessions. We were so relieved that he was not hurt, but very sad about our boat. We were given shelter at the house that is now the Wistrand's for the weekend. Everyone was very kind.

In 1949, my sister, Jean, drew us a 20' by 20' cabin plan while a senior at Queen Anne High School. During that year we would load lumber onto the top of our cruiser and bring it to the property, then push it ashore to build our cabin. I remember it was a lot of work but fun. We first camped on the floor of the new cabin in a tent, until we had the luxury of walls. We had no electricity, an outhouse, and had to go over to the well house on Lloyd's property to get water. The Bay was beautiful. We had kerosene lamps to read by. Life was good.

One of the many good times at the Bay was clam digging on "Clam Island", the sunken island just out from the sand spit inside the Bay. At low tide the island emerged, and in those days, was a perfect place for Little Neck clams. We would take shovels and buckets and walk to the island, sometimes pulling a small boat behind. The clams were abundant and tasty.

In the late 1960's and 70's the sand spit was developed with the existing houses, as well as dredging for the boat docks along the inside of the spit. Since that time, the Little Neck clams have disappeared from "Clam Island". It would be so great if we now could figure out how to help make the Bay healthy again and maybe even get the clams back on "Clam Island". Lloyd and Mayme, soon wanted to "move on" and Sid took over the payment on the 18 acres. Thus today Jean Meek, Betty Arend, and Sharon Nichols along with families and various neighbors, live down Sid Price Road.



Special presentation: ***NORTH KITSAP AND REGIONAL TRAILS***
By John Willett, Kitsap Trails Association Vice President
Details inside.

Opportunities and Challenges Cowling Creek Forest Preserve

By Nancy D' Archangel FMB Secretary

About two years ago last August, FOMB put out an SOS to their supporters. The October 31st, 2007 deadline to pay off the county for the 2nd parcel of Cowling Creek property was fast approaching and the chances of raising the remaining \$37,000 needed looked pretty grim.

A final appeal was made by mail and the results were miraculous! For over 2 months, checks flowed into our post office box and the full amount, \$260,000, was presented to the county commissioners in early November.

The entire process was an amazing and rewarding experience. So many wonderful people from all walks of life stepped up to help us in our fundraising efforts. And YOU, our loyal supporters came through with flying colors. Because of your generosity and because you cared about protecting the Cowling Creek watershed, almost 20 more acres of permanent open space were added to the Cowling Creek Forest Preserve. You have our heartfelt thanks!

After all those years of fundraising, we have been having a hard time getting ourselves back in gear. There is a tremendous amount of work still to be done to make the Cowling Creek Forest Preserve a wonderful place to visit. Besides improving the walking trails and parking area, we need signs and maps, and would also like to have some edu-

cational exhibits. Having some new board members and increasing our regular membership could give us the boost we need to accomplish these goals. Please renew your membership and volunteer to help us in whatever way suits you best.



Photo by Paul Dorn