

Sustaining the Islands – Community Stewardship Awards Program



Islands Trust

2017 Nominee Profile

Brenda Guiled, Salt Spring Island

Category: Individual

Project: Advocating for community sustainability and active transportation

Nominator(s): Jan Slakov

Description:

Brenda Guiled is nominated for her dedication to community projects.

From 2015 to 2017, Brenda collaborated with a group of local residents to advocate for, and prevent the destruction of, the Monk Farmhouse on Salt Spring Island. A historic place in the Beaver Point area, the farmhouse was slated for destruction and removal. Brenda brought together local residents to repurpose the farmhouse into an interpretative center. Brenda researched and wrote a book titled “Ruckles’ World: A History of South-East Salt Spring Island” as a fundraiser to help save the farmhouse. Despite Brenda’s efforts, the farmhouse was demolished. However, the “Ruckles’ World” book continues to contribute to the community’s understanding of Salt Spring Island history.

In addition, for the past eight years Brenda has served on the board of Island Pathways in different capacities, including chair of the Bicycle Working Group and chair of the board. The goal of Island Pathways is to improve active, multi-modal transportation on Salt Spring Island and in the Salish Sea region. Brenda continues to work to get a bikeway through Salt Spring Island for both safety and economic purposes. She also prepares Island Pathways newsletters, brochures and other publicity materials, and manages the Island Pathways website. Brenda’s work for Island Pathways benefits those who value safer commuting and reducing ecological footprints.

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2017 Nominee Profile

Jacinthe Eastick, Gabriola Island

Category: Individual

Project: Community involvement

Nominator(s): Richard Nolan

Description:

Jacinthe Eastick is an active participant in democracy on Gabriola Island. She participates in many community discussions including community forums and meetings. Jacinthe is an advocate in the community and helps to increase community awareness of Gabriola Island's Official Community Plan and bylaws. Jacinthe frequently examines proposed development and, with energy and commitment, advocates a cautious approach on many issues. She sparks community conversations and helps to ensure that island ecosystems are considered in local decision making.

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2017 Nominee Profile

John Peirce, Gabriola Island

Category: Individual

Project: Cross-border conservation covenant and trail licenses

Nominator(s): Gabriola Land and Trails Trust

Description:

John Peirce is nominated for his work to protect island ecosystems and trail development. As president of Gabriola Land and Trails Trust (GaLTT) from 2011-2014, John led a coordinated process with GaLTT, an American Gabriola landowner named Sally Robinson, and American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts (American Friends), to establish American Friends' first conservation covenant in British Columbia. John was also instrumental in establishing GaLTT's ability to establish formal trail-use license agreements with private landowners.

The Robinson Woods Conservation Covenant Initiative created ongoing benefits for Gabriola Island and opened the door for future land conservation by American landowners on the Gulf Islands and elsewhere in B.C. The Robinson Woods conservation covenant area protects natural open space and scenic views, sensitive Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem habitat, and the shoreline.

John's leadership in developing GaLTT's process for temporary trail-use licenses has resulted in more public trail connections throughout Gabriola Island, while enhancing recreation and non-vehicle transportation opportunities. By creating new systems, John has laid the groundwork for similar future projects that allow people to protect and enjoy natural spaces with minimal impact to ecosystems.

John is now Vice President of American Friends and active in their effort with Mayne Island Conservancy Society to preserve the St. John Point property on Mayne Island.

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2017 Nominee Profile

Karen Ethridge, Hornby Island and Denman Island

Category: Individual

Project: 15 years providing leadership in community health care

Nominator(s): Joanne Graham

Description:

As the Home Support Supervisor for the Hornby and Denman Community Health Care Society for the past 15 years, Karen Ethridge provided strong leadership as she worked with hospital staff, local doctors, client families, health authority staff and other health care workers to develop a robust home support program for Hornby and Denman Islands. The program is renowned throughout B.C. for its client-centred approach to aging in place and end-of-life care.

Karen's unique approach to home support resulted in many island seniors being able to live in their own homes as they age. Over the years, Karen's kind and compassionate care served as an example to the 35+ caregivers she mentored. Her care also contributed to the social well-being of the islands as resident seniors were well-supported to remain active and participate in community events. Karen's work and dedication has created a legacy of high-level, compassionate care for island seniors.

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2017 Nominee Profile

Laura Matthias, Salt Spring Island

Category: Individual

Project: Protecting, restoring and stewarding the natural environment

Nominator(s): Peter Ommundsen

Description:

For the past decade, Laura Matthias has taken a leadership role in environmental protection as a biologist with the Salt Spring Island Conservancy. Laura has been instrumental in the acquisition and restoration of natural ecosystems and has worked with private landowners to develop habitat protection initiatives for species at risk.

Laura has been a leader on Salt Spring by supporting community awareness and participation in the conservation of nature. Laura has involved landowners in conservation, restoration and habitat protection projects on private property. She has also engaged the public through educational events, hands-on workshops, working with students on restoration projects, volunteer recruitment, landowner visits, wildlife photography, educational articles and videos. In addition, Laura has invited local specialists to help inventory Salt Spring ecosystems. Her restoration projects have attracted hundreds of community volunteers to assist with establishment of a native plant nursery, native plantings, plant and animal surveys, site preparation, invasive plant removal, stream bank restoration and wetland creation.

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2017 Nominee Profile

Michelle Catherine Nelson, Bowen Island

Category: Individual

Project: Food sustainability initiatives and community involvement

Nominator(s): Wild Foraged

Description:

Michelle Catherine Nelson has completed various food sustainability initiatives and is actively involved in the community on Bowen Island. Michelle's projects include: recreation, economic development, tourism, food, and have attracted involvement from people of many interest groups.

Michelle promotes a new way of thinking about human impacts on landscapes and communities. She has developed an educational farm and has facilitated learning and community events on Bowen. Michelle's efforts to educate islanders and others about how to collect wild food sustainably, eat invasive species, design gardens in eco-friendly ways, and preserve local, seasonal produce, increase community resiliency and promote conservation of the natural environment. Michelle started a community dinner series on Bowen Island to teach about collecting and cooking wild food on Bowen Island and to bring neighbors together. She has also written food related articles in the local newspaper and local magazines, and a cookbook that is available in local stores.

Michelle founded and chairs the Bowen Island Women in Business group and she started the first Earth to Ocean Bowen Island Triathlon in 2016. Michelle was appointed to the Bowen Island Council's Economic Development Committee, is the Chair of the Business Retention and Enhancement Working Group, and is appointed to the Tourism Bowen Island Board. Projects she is spearheading or co-chairing include a local economy summit, an economic leakage study and a website to network and promote local products and services.

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2017 Nominee Profile

Lasqueti Island Emergency Dispatch Advisory Committee

Category: Organization

Project: Fostering community engagement

Nominator(s): Brigitte Dorner

Description:

In 2016, the Lasqueti Island Emergency Dispatch Advisory Committee (EDAC) was established to research and advise the Powell River Regional District on the best options for emergency dispatch on Lasqueti and surrounding islands.

The EDAC consisted of volunteers who met at least twice a month to address the committee's terms of reference. The EDAC used an interest-based approach to engage the community and collaborate with various stakeholders. The EDAC produced a final report with recommendations for emergency dispatch services. This report details a recommended dispatch system, including the required financial, technical and human resources. The recommended approach considered the community's desire to preserve the island's character by avoiding the need for new communication towers.

The EDAC approach fostered public participation on Lasqueti Island in ways that will encourage future public engagement in issues affecting the community, including land-use issues.

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2017 Nominee Profile

Mayne Island Assisted Living Society

Category: Organization

Project: Community services to enhance islanders' quality of life

Nominator(s): Mayne Island Lions Club

Description:

Since 2003, the Mayne Island Assisted Living Society (MIALS) has helped Mayne Islanders of all ages to have choices related to their living arrangements and quality of life.

Mayne Island Assisted Living Society, which has one part-time paid co-ordinator, relies on volunteers to provide support to islanders who ask for help. Volunteers drive people to appointments on and off the island and to places such as the grocery store and library. MIALS volunteers also assist those who may be becoming increasingly isolated in their homes by making friendly visits, and helping with small projects in and around the home. The MIALS co-ordinator organizes the island's Meals On Wheels program where volunteers distribute the meals to those in need.

Mayne Island Assisted Living Society helps seniors maintain their lifestyle in their own homes for as long as possible. This service ensures islanders remain in familiar surroundings and within their social network, benefiting the individual, their family, and the community. The current Board of Directors is now actively pursuing a new pilot project in the community to further reduce isolation among our seniors.

Over the years, MIALS has collaborated with businesses and other island societies when organizing the fundraising events that allow MIALS to continue to offer its services for free.

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2017 Nominee Profile

Mudge Island Citizens Society

Category: Organization

Project: Establishing and operating the Mudge Island Citizens Society

Nominator(s): Peter Alexander

Description:

The Mudge Island Citizens Society (MICS) helps make Mudge Island self-sufficient and resilient by providing support for fire prevention, firefighting equipment, and emergency and medical services on Mudge Island.

MICS volunteers have developed and maintained land that is used to store and service emergency and firefighting equipment and accessories, and emergency medical equipment and supplies. They have also acquired cisterns for bulk storage of rainwater for island firefighting use.

MICS has purchased and maintains three Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) for the use of island residents. The AEDs are housed at accessible roadside locations around the island. To encourage community support and participation, they host regular educational events on topics of wildfire response, emergency medical response, the use of AED's, first aid, and equipment maintenance.

The MICS's work benefits both the ecology and community of Mudge Island. MICS's work in fire prevention and response, and promotion of rain water storage contributes to protection of local ecosystems. The volunteer work of Mudge Island Citizen's Society fosters community engagement, participation, and responsibility. Their work benefits the preservation of the natural rural environment and the cohesiveness of the Mudge Island community.

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2017 Nominee Profile

Salt Spring Seniors Services Society

Category: Organization

Project: Providing the Salt Spring Seniors Centre Driving Program

Nominator(s): Edward Gijssen

Description:

The Salt Spring Seniors Services Society operates the Salt Spring Seniors Centre Driving Program that helps get island seniors to medical appointments in Victoria, Sidney, Nanaimo, Duncan, Saanich and on Salt Spring Island.

The program has four desk dispatchers who receive requests from local residents for drives to medical appointments and almost 30 drivers who take the passengers to their appointments, wait for them, and then bring them home. The program coordinated 324 drives in 2015-2016, and 327 drives in 2016-2017.

The Salt Spring Seniors Centre Driving Program is designed to allow people to reach medical care, contributing to the well-being of seniors and the Salt Spring Island community.