

A close-up photograph of several people's hands stacked together in a circle, symbolizing unity and collaboration. The hands are of various skin tones and are positioned in a way that suggests a group effort or a shared goal. The background is a blurred green field, suggesting an outdoor setting.

# Palouse Land Trust

2021 Newsletter

Conservation | Collaboration | Connection



## Gifts of abundance

I delight in a good story. A friend recently shared an essay by the indigenous author Robin Wall Kimmerer titled “The Serviceberry: An Economy of Abundance,” published in Emergence Magazine. Her prose resonates with me in a profound way.



Her story centers on the ecology of Serviceberry, the small, hard fruits of a woody plant that is native to the wilds across North America and widely recognized for its cultural importance. She describes these berries as gifts from the land, energy flowing from the sunshine and rain into the bellies of bees, birds and people alike, concentrating as the gift transfers its wealth through the system of life.

Within the pages of this newsletter, you will read stories of conservation, collaboration, and connection. Like the story of the Serviceberry, these stories reflect abundance and nurturing of community well-being—the gifts that flow from the relationships we have with each other and with the lands we love.

Like you, I have experienced points during these past two years that have felt so heavy and troubling that I too “needed a break from the Windigo shadows that were creeping towards me,” as written by Kimmerer. Turning to nature, whether pausing to observe a flower or spending days away from phone or internet in the backcountry, we can connect to the rhythm of the land and the abundance of nature’s gifts.

In a world that can be bitter, we can all relish the goodness and sweetness that comes from gratitude and the web of reciprocity—or giving a gift in return. Whether it be a gift of your precious time, your talents, or your treasure, it is a gift of abundance that in turn benefits the natural world. I invite you to fill your bucket with the gifts of the land and celebrate the delights that you have made possible through reciprocity. My profound gratitude to you for your generosity for a sustainable future.

With thanks,

Lovina Englund, Executive Director

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## Please join in honoring the memories of three very dear PLT family members who left us this year.

### Memories of Amy Shook-Carter, by Archie George



Amy Shook-Carter joined the PLT board of Directors in 2013. Prior to that, she and her husband Bruce Carter had supported PLT for some time, financially and as gifted and joyful volunteers. She was the consummate, dedicated professional, and always a joy to work with.

Soon after joining the board, she served as Treasurer, during a period of rapid growth at PLT. Her insights, perspective and experience with hiring and managing personnel were especially valuable as staff expanded. She had a dry wit; I still hear her infectious laugh and Wisconsin accent. She was so much fun, especially when the PLT family set up tables, chairs and decorated spaces for annual meetings and other public events. We miss her tremendously, but she lives on in our hearts.

### Remembering Dr. Jack Rogers, by Libby Walker

Jack was a nationally and internationally renowned mycologist, a dedicated teacher, an avid hunter and fly fisherman, and a dedicated husband of 63 years to his wife Belle and father to their twin daughters. He traveled the world to collect specimens for his research but his first priority and passion was teaching his students.



He will be remembered by Palouse Land Trust as a sincere friend and generous donor. Both Jack and Belle were particularly dedicated to supporting efforts to make Idler’s Rest accessible to everyone and especially to those with physical challenges. We are grateful for their commitment to this important cause.

### Jo Washburn, Cougar Hall of Fame Inductee, by Libby Walker



Former Women’s Athletic Director Jo Washburn, who spent 39 years as an administrator and faculty member at Washington State University, will be remembered as a giant in college athletics history. She fought tirelessly for gender equity and participated, along with 12 other coaches and 39 student athletes, in filing a lawsuit in 1979 against WSU for failing to comply with Title IX, the 1972 federal law mandating gender equity.

Jo was responsible for the expansion of college women’s athletics at the state, regional, and national levels. She served as Women’s Athletic Director from 1965 - 1983 when Women’s Athletics was merged with Men’s Athletics. She subsequently became a faculty member and was responsible for the creation of the Sport Management major which now offers a Master’s Degree at WSU. We will remember Jo for her passionate commitment to conservation and her generous support of the Palouse Land Trust. Thank you Jo!



# Conserved spaces, outdoor learning places

## Antibiotics, insects, and grasses, oh my

The Dave Skinner Ecological Preserve is an ideal research site for many disciplines, thanks to its unaltered landscape and native habitat. This year, Dan Du of the UI Department of Water and Soil Systems conducted field testing on the pristine soil microbial communities there to learn about the impacts of airborne antibiotic spread. His research will continue throughout the next year.



Megan Blance, graduate student at WSU, also utilized the special habitat of the Skinner Preserve and Idler's Rest to study grass aphids and their host plants. We look forward to sharing her findings soon.

## Urban agriculture, just a short walk from school

After a year-hiatus due to Covid-19 restrictions, 75 second-grade students from nearby McDonald Elementary were able to visit the Fosberg Farm this spring.



Classes met the cows, Blaze the horse, and Zeke the mule while learning the importance of urban agriculture. Peering into Paradise Creek and a trip around the restored Palouse Prairie gave the kiddos a lesson in healthy waterways and the history of the region we call home.

## Inspiring and encouraging the next generation

Supporting the next generation of conservation leaders is paramount in achieving the promise of perpetual conservation. Recognizing the need and opportunity for students to gain valuable experience, PLT board member and faculty emeritus, Nick Sanyal, alongside his dear friend and colleague, the late Bill McLaughlin created The Conservation Without Borders Endowment at the UI's College of Natural Resources.

*(continued on next page)*

**From top to bottom:** Dan Du installing a monitoring sleeve on his test plot on the Skinner Preserve; Megan Blance experiencing the "light breeze" at the Skinner Preserve; McDonald Elementary students meeting Blaze, one of the residents of the Fosberg Farm; Stewardship Intern Kelsey Vershum cutting in new trail on the Neuman conservation easement this summer.



This endowment connects undergraduates in the natural resources field with organizations like PLT to gain experience and see real-world applications of conservation management in action. This summer we welcomed Kelsey Vershum, class of '23 to the stewardship team thanks to this scholarship.

Kelsey is starting her junior year in Conservation Biology this fall, with a certification in GIS (Geographic Information Systems) mapping. She assisted Karl with annual monitoring of conserved properties,

worked with GIS mapping and recordkeeping, performed stewardship tasks at Idler's Rest Nature Preserve, and was a wonderful addition to the lands team. This experience will help her not only with her schoolwork, but ultimately with her future career in natural resources.

*Call us to learn more about how making a legacy and/or endowment gift can support research that has lasting impacts on the lands, waters, and people of the Palouse and north-central Idaho.*

**Volunteer: (noun)** a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task.

**see also:** Indispensable; Generous; Community-minded; Champions.

**N**one of the good work happening across the lands we love is possible without you and a community of engaged supporters. This is especially true when we speak about the exceptional folks who not only give of their treasure, but their time and talents, too.

No one has exemplified that sense of community service and altruism more this year than Dave Ostrom. Dave is not only one of our beloved Conservation Heroes (our team of monthly supporters), but a standout volunteer.

Dave gives generously of his time, photography skills, and extensive construction knowledge to help with habitat and trail improvements, stewardship tasks, and showcasing the beautiful conserved properties of our region. Head to [www.ostromphotos.photoshelter.com](http://www.ostromphotos.photoshelter.com) and select the Dave Skinner Ecological Preserve in the North American Galleries section (there's an Idler's Rest gallery, too) to see his great work.

"In my pursuit of opportunities to see and

photograph wildlife I've always sought out the edges of the earth. Those unspoiled places in the world that are remote and untouched by civilization or other development.

"Palouse Land Trust offers a version of that and I love volunteering for them as a way of seeing those places and to support PLT in their mission to permanently conserve what is left. PLT also provides an opportunity to meet and work with a great group of people including the amazing staff and other dedicated volunteers."

*Below: Dave installing new directional and trail signs at Idler's Rest.*



# A new era at Idler's Rest

For over 100 years, Idler's Rest has been a place of respite, recreation, and group gatherings. Together, the community rallied to protect the space by creating the public nature preserve in 1968. 50-some years later, you came together as a community again to ensure that more of our friends and neighbors could access the space and benefit from the power of the natural world.

*And your part in this was nothing short of exceptional.*

## Nature for all

Thanks to your ongoing support, a new Universally Accessible section of trail was christened this June to celebrate a new era of inclusion and accessibility at Idler's Rest.

Utilizing a remarkable geotextile grid from the woman-owned CORE Landscaping Company of Canada, the new trail surface provides traction and stability for visitors using mobility-assistive devices like wheelchairs and strollers, while careful grading and sloping allows for a gentle, safe entry into the cedar grove. The project has also strengthened relations with Disability Action Center NW, with hopes of future accessibility improvements at Idler's and beyond.

After many years without informational and directional signage, visitors new and old can feel confident navigating the trails. Moscow's first female Eagle Scout (and one of an inaugural class of under 1000 across the US, all during a global pandemic), Aila Carr-Chellman earned her rank by creating beautiful hand-routed trail signs. A new informational kiosk gives trail distances, difficulty, and other helpful information for an enjoyable visit.

**Above right:** The Universally Accessible bridge and trail into the cedar grove welcomes visitors of all ages and abilities.

**Middle:** Aila Carr-Chellman staining the beautiful trail signs she created for Idler's Rest (© Geoff Crimmins, Daily News)

**Bottom:** Informational kiosk and Mark Anderson Memorial Dog Station at the parking lot trail head.



## Restoring and Replanting

An unfortunate function of expansion and improvement is disturbance to the soils and plants at Idler's Rest. The Co-Op's Dime in Time grant program funded the purchase of locally sourced native plants from Pitkin Forest Nursery and the Whitepine Chapter Native Plant Sale, while our friends from Cub Scout Pack 323 helped us replant the entire parking lot area this spring. Native grasses, shrubs and wildflowers will soon reestablish around the main trailhead area, providing habitat for critters great and small.

A new safer and more environmentally friendly bridge now crosses the stream. With much improved clearance and footings, the new bridge will allow for free flow of Idler's Rest Creek and help take pressure off the stream banks. Metal for the handrails was reclaimed from the UI Johnson Engineering reconstruction project, and boards were sourced and specially milled on Moscow Mountain.

**Right:** Cub Scout Pack 323 and parents spent a muddy, slopy afternoon replanting the parking area. Thanks Cubbies!

## Stewardship, now and forever

While major improvements are complete, continual care and management of the space is ongoing. This summer, our friends at Moscow-Pullman Building Supply signed on to become our official Idler's Rest Stewardship Sponsor.

Thanks to their generosity and community commitment, Idler's Rest now has a brand new, dedicated suite of hand tools, saws, and safety gear for staff and volunteers to use for trail and habitat maintenance now and well into the future. Thank you MPBS!



In late 2019, the PLT family and the community mourned the loss of Mark Anderson, a longtime PLT supporter and friend. He loved the Palouse, especially walking the trails at Idler's Rest with his four-legged companion, Lola (shown here doing what they loved most - being outdoors together).

We are humbled to celebrate Mark's life and legacy with a special memorial dog station, lovingly crafted by local artisan Shelly Gilmore.

## Better together: how teamwork really does make the dream work

A conservation organization, a fire prevention organization, a state agency, a bunch of teenagers, a nature preserve, and some private forest landowners walk into a bar...

But seriously, what do all of these different groups possibly have in common? A love of the land, unique skillsets, and a passion for partnership, just to name a few. This summer, teams from Palouse Land Trust, Idaho Firewise, Idaho Department of Lands, the Clearwater Basin Collaborative Youth Conservation Corps, and private landowners came together to reduce fire fuels and improve habitat at Idler's Rest and PLT protected properties.

### Have skills, will lumberjack

How do employees at the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) develop the skills necessary to steward Idaho's endowment lands and mitigate the impacts of wildland fire? Lots of real-world practice, of course!

This summer Assistant Fire Marshal Mike McManus and crew used Idler's Rest and the Sharp easement as practical training opportunities for IDL staff. While learning best practices for implementing fuel treatments on land used as a public space, the crew removed dead and insect-infested trees and low branches that can easily which flames into the forest canopy. Thanks to this special collaboration, IDL team members honed their skills and Idler's Rest (as well as our neighbors and the Moscow Mountain corridor) is healthier and safer in terms of wildfire risk.

### Developing the next generation

Getting rid of unhealthy trees and cutting back overgrown vegetation (read: fire fuels) is just the first step in good management and stewardship. Partners at Idaho Firewise know this well and were there with marvelous resources.

Working in collaboration with the Clearwater Basin Collaborative's Potlatch-based Youth Conservation Corps (CBCYCC), Idaho Firewise connected us with a crew of outstanding young people who are beginning their journey in natural resource careers. Corps members spent the summer learning about career opportunities and gaining skills in all facets of the natural resources sector to stoke their passion and prepare them for a future in conservation.

The CBCYCC team followed behind IDL employees to cut back and haul out branches, vegetation, and logs in an effort to reduce fire fuels at Idler's Rest. The project introduced YCC members to our work, and that of our partners, and provided them valuable learning opportunities in handheld tool use, forest



health, and land management.

We couldn't have done this amazing project with the partnership of all involved, including generous financial support from *you!*

### Stewardship for spaces public and private

This collaborative stewardship assistance doesn't just extend to public lands and public spaces like Idler's Rest. Idaho Firewise and the CBCYCC also answered the call of private land stewards Rose Sharp, her daughter Peggy Quesnell, and land manager Brad Herrenbruck of the Sharp conservation easement.

Similar to the Idler's Rest project, crews removed sick and dead trees, followed by the YCC team who handled vegetation and ladder fuel removal and clean up on the 75-acre, permanently protected property.

"My mother, Rose Sharp and I really appreciated the help the Youth Conservation Corps gave to our property. We have been

quite concerned about fire and keeping up safety precautions on our land, especially this year. They worked really hard during super-hot weather to help clean up brush and trees. We were thankful for all their work," shared Peggy, after crews finished thinning and clearing some problem areas on the property.

"The pruning in particular is really impressive, and for such a hot week they made wonderful progress," extolled Brad. "I know their work will be a huge help to the owners and myself."

None of this wonderful collaborative work would be possible without your continued support and love of the lands and waters that sustain and define us across the Palouse. Thank you for making magic like this happen.

**Left:** The Potlatch YCC all-stars.

**Above, left to right:** The IDL fire crew and PLT staff at Idler's Rest; IDL staff assessing dense stands of Ponderosas on the meadow side of Idler's Rest; Youth Crew following the IDL team to clear branches and remove excess fire fuels at Idler's Rest; Youth Crew member ready to lop.



# Stewardship on the Skinner

Good stewardship of special properties like the Dave Skinner Ecological Preserve is a unique challenge. Thankfully, there is an amazing community of supporters like you, agency partners, and volunteers working tirelessly to care for and champion the imperiled prairie ecosystem.



Brenda Erhardt and crew at the Latah County Soil & Water Conservation District have been busy restoring Spalding's Catchfly populations across the preserve and surrounding privately owned prairie lands. This year, spring monitoring showed high survival rates of seedlings. These sites will be augmented with more plants this fall.



Stewardship of the Skinner doesn't just include boots-on-the-ground management projects. Joel Sauder of Idaho Fish & Game led a citizen science field day to sample pollinator populations for the PNW Bumble Bee Atlas Project. Trained volunteers counted pollinators to aid in the project supporting bee conservation in ID, WA and OR.



Our local chapter of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness worked with stewardship partner Jacie Jensen of Thorn Creek Native Seed Farm to plant Prairie smoke and Sandberg bluegrass in multiple locations on the preserve. Restoration plantings like these are critical to the overall health and vitality of the property, and for pollinators and other native species in the region.



# A salute to service

This year, we said “goodbye” to two very special board members. While they’re certainly not leaving the PLT family, their leadership, spirit, and wisdom will be missed at committee and board meetings.

## Roger Blanchard

Serving as a full board member since 2012, Roger has actually been involved with PLT since the very beginning, 26 years ago. During his tenure as a City of Moscow employee, Roger helped work out the details of PLT's first conservation easement which resulted in the creation of Berman Creekside Park. From then on, Roger's service as an advisor, board member, and officer has helped plot the course of conservation across our region.

“Especially rewarding and meaningful for me have been working with Judy LaLonde and Amy Trujillo to create the Neuman Easement. It is exciting to see Judy's Trail being developed there now. Similarly, it

was so wonderful to act as a lead in forming and writing the McCloskey Easement, the second PLT easement in Whitman County and first in Pullman.



“More than anything, being able to associate with so many wonderful conservation-minded people who really care about preserving our rich palette of natural and special places, and working farms and forests has been the best part of my experience with PLT.”

## Helen Stroebel



Being a land steward on her family's conserved property is only one part of Helen's deep relationship with the Land Trust.

“It has been an honor and immensely

rewarding to serve on the Board of Directors for PLT during a time of significant organizational growth. Seeing the staff grow from a single ED to three full-time employees and a part-time staff plus interns is just the tip of the iceberg.

“It's the evolution of the Board of Directors from a hands-on board ‘doing’ conservation easement monitoring and working with land

owners on new easements, to a diverse, vision-focused board actively engaged in growing the community of PLT supporters that has been particularly gratifying.

“The results of this organizational transformation is manifested in over 2040 acres of lands conserved forever including 137 in preserves owned by PLT... and that makes my heart sing!”

### Looking for Leaders

Palouse Land Trust is looking for new board members ready to help chart the course of permanent conservation across the Palouse and north-central Idaho.

Spoiler alert: it's hard work and you won't be paid for it – except in the joy and satisfaction of knowing that you're protecting our most exceptional landscapes not just for today, but for generations to come. Email or call Lovina at [lovina@palouselandtrust.org](mailto:lovina@palouselandtrust.org)/208-669-0722 to learn more about serving your community and the lands you love.

# Judy's Trail

When landowner Judy LaLonde came to the Land Trust in 2013 to permanently protect her property just outside the city limits of Troy, Idaho, she had a dream. She didn't just want to conserve her special property in honor of her late brother, Brad Neuman. One day, she wanted to be able to welcome students, friends, and the public onto the land to learn, explore, and revel in the wonder of nature.

## Vision for the future

"I've always thought it would be so nice to be able to share the property with my friends, because it's just so beautiful. I want it to be saved, just the way it is, but I would also like it not just to be mine, but to share it. I want it to be a place where everyone, especially the kids at the school, can come and learn about it, the trees, the birds, there's just so much here," Judy shares with staff.

**"I want it to be saved, just the way it is, but I would also like it not just to be mine, but to share it."**

*-Judy LaLonde, on her vision for the land and for the community*

"Brad loved this land, and I love this land. Protecting it forever was just the first step in the process back in 2013. It's amazing to see the design, development, and actual groundbreaking of the new trail. I can't wait for people to use it, I can't wait for the kids to come out and look in the creek and discover the deer trails. It's a dream come true."



Because of conservation champions like you, Judy's Trail is taking shape along the banks of Big Meadow Creek just outside Troy, ID now.

## It takes a village

In addition to years of dreaming, a new public use nature trail takes a whole lot of planning – and a whole lot of help – to make possible. Dozens of rockstar volunteers rolled up their sleeves to make the 1.2 mile loop of Judy's Trail a reality in June.

The trail came about under the caring mentorship of Ed Krumpe, who guided the trail construction alongside PLT and Idaho Firewise AmeriCorps member Emma Sondker.

## Increasing opportunity

Thanks to your continued support of land conservation, you're making it possible for students to learn in nature's classroom, enjoy the health benefits of getting active outdoors,

and considerably increasing public non-motorized recreational access in a small, rural community.

"I am really excited to have beautiful property dedicated for the use of recreation and education," shares cross country coach and music teacher, Tera Stoner. "This is a piece of heaven right in the middle of Troy and so accessible from school property. Many students will spend hours enjoying beauty thanks to Judy Lalonde and her vision. What a gift to give our future!"

Already, her athletes have been training on the trail during practice, and several other instructors are planning to utilize the two outdoor classrooms being developed off the main trail.

This fall, the streamside laboratory will be accessible for students to access Big Meadow Creek to learn about the riparian ecosystem, and the vital steelhead spawning ground in-stream. A forestry classroom atop the ridge will be home to a future open-air, covered classroom for students learning about natural resources, native species,

**Top, left to right:** Volunteers lop branches to clear the way for trail builders; Crews hard at work cutting in the trail across the forest floor; The first stage of trail development is complete!

**Bottom, left to right:** Many hands make light work as Ed Krumpe instructs; Volunteers clearing the upper forest section; Board member Libby Walker is never afraid to roll up her sleeves for the land.

wildlife and more.

Along with the outdoor classrooms, interpretive signage will guide trail users and share more about the property and local ecosystem.

The students of Troy School aren't the only ones who will greatly benefit from Judy's Trail. Within Troy City limits, there are only two public green spaces with opportunity for recreation – the City Park and access to the Latah Trail corridor. Judy's Trail will fill the great need for recreational access for the entire community. Stay tuned this fall and spring for updates and grand opening celebration!



You're part of a very special family A group of committed, concerned, and community-minded people who care deeply for the lands and waters we all love.

Together, you're ensuring that we all enjoy healthy habitat, clean waters, open spaces, rare ecosystems, and our rural way of life, not just for today, but for generations to come. Thank you for being part of this movement and for working together for the Palouse and north-central Idaho.

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*Working with landowners and communities to conserve the lands we love, now and forever, and to enrich connections to the natural world.*

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*"As a young person, I took nature for granted – I was surrounded by warblers, spring peepers, wild rivers, and forests. I assumed that the natural world would always be safe. Over time, my eyes have been opened to a world in which song-birds, frogs, insects, clean rivers, diversity of vegetation and great natural beauty increasingly are threatened. By human activity.*

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