

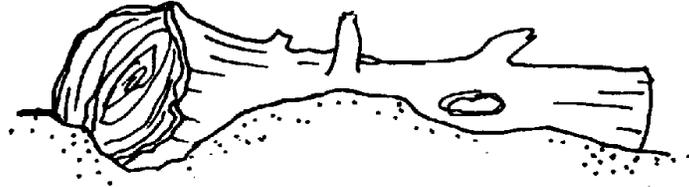


*Education,
Research,
Stewardship*

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
ISLAND COUNTY EXTENSION

Beach Log

SEPTEMBER 2013



WSU Beach Watchers P. O. Box 5000 Coupeville WA 98239 360-679-7391 ; 321-5111 or 629-4522 Ext. 7391 FAX 360-678-4120
Camano Office: 121 N. East Camano Dr., Camano Island, WA 98282, 387-3443 ext. 258, E-mail: wsu.bw.island@gmail.com
Web address: www.beachwatchers.wsu.edu

Words From Barbara Bennett, Program Coordinator

WSU Extension Island County Beach Watchers

Administration in Action



After a remarkably beautiful summer, fall 2013 has arrived with the usual flurry of activity. Communication to all our members on both islands is a huge challenge.

This is Joanne McMillen's final edition of the Beach Log as Editor. She has done a terrific job for two years. Under her good natured and persistent care, the Log has grown into a livelier and more comprehensive document. The Log helps present the program to our members and beyond.

Beginning 2014, the Beach Log will be issued **quarterly** (down to 4 times a year vs. six editions each year). I am pleased to welcome Phillip Osborne, BW class of 2013, as the new managing editor for the Beach Log. Joanne is providing a great orientation and Phillip will take up his role, with Joanne coaching, for the November edition. Every member of Beach Watchers has a story to tell about an interest or a project, let Phillip know what you would like to add to the Beach Log and be looking for invitations to write articles for future editions. Welcome Phillip and thank you.

For all the latest activities and links to great information, check out the new Beach Watchers calendar site: <http://beachwatchers.net/web/intro>. It has become the best way to keep up with Beach Watchers events across the county and on both islands. You will find dates, times and details for events, BWAC minutes and documents and links to important sites. Thanks very much to Nicole Luce, Patty Sebelski and Connie Clark for creating this site and their steady work to keep it up to date.

The Annual Meeting for all WSU Island County Beach Watchers will be January 16, 2014 from 10 AM – 2 PM. We will meet at the WSU Mount Vernon Agricultural Research Station off Route 20: <http://mtvernon.wsu.edu/drivingdirections.html>. We will review our accomplishments and look ahead. Come to celebrate all we do and to discuss questions about WSU and the program— it is an important and fun get together!

The Class of 2013, 30 members strong, will graduate on October 30, 2013 at Deception Pass State Park. Presentations will take place from 10 AM to Noon, followed by lunch (including Penn Cove Mussels) and presentation of certificates. Join us! It's a great chance to get acquainted with our remarkable newest Beach Watchers and welcome them. It is also a chance to thank our tireless Training Committee members: Sue Howard, Sheila Means, Margaret Elphick, Loran Blankenship, Jill Hein, Gary Skorheim, Pat Foss, Michele Johnson, and Finn Gatewood.

See page 8 for Fall 2013 training and pages 3 and 4 for reports on the grant funded summer activities: Crabber Education and Digging for Dinner

*Barbara Bennett, BW Class of 2011
BW Program Coordinator Barbara.bennett@wsu.edu*



**Words From Tom Vos, President
Beach Watchers Advisory Council (BWAC)**

Administration in Action



Let me start by thanking the Camano and Whidbey Steering Committees, as well as the speakers/presenters, who together orchestrated a truly enjoyable and informative combined members meeting on September 9th. It was a great opportunity to get to look at Cornet Bay from the perspectives of several Beach Watchers projects. We had a good turnout, a beautiful day, and I think it can be said that a good time was had by all! I think everyone was in agreement that in the right venue and the right program, it's something we ought to do again sometime.

Your BWAC, kicking off the fall season, is revisiting Council functions and procedures, as well as those of the greater BW Program. This year-end, we will be moving the BWAC Strategic Planning Meeting into November; well in advance of the Annual Meeting in January. This will allow us to provide greater insights on BWAC objectives and direction to the general membership on a timely basis. It also gives the new incoming BWAC members a clearer orientation on the Council's work in the coming year.

With the hope to increase awareness across the organization, stay current on project needs and opportunities and document our accomplishments, BWAC members will soon assume new roles, in collaboration with the Program Coordinator, as points of contact for a number of projects and activities. In this capacity, we see the BWAC member as a person who can provide project leaders with assistance or information and relay information about project status, needs and opportunities. We also will be seeking an annual report from each project lead to maintain records of our accomplishments and support the Coordinator's reports to the broader community as well as the University. As these will be evolving roles, we ask your support in seeking the ways to make this a help in communication and increase overall visibility about the many valuable projects we do.



As you are now routinely checking our great and continuously updated Beach Watchers web calendar, you will note that BWAC is adjusting our normal fourth Tuesday meeting schedule as we go into the holiday season. Our regular October meeting is on the 22nd, the Strategic Planning meeting November 21st, and then no meeting scheduled for December.

Tom Vos, BWAC President, stvos@whidbey.net

Island County Sheriff Office "Drug Take Back" program

October 26th 10:00 A.M -2:00 P.M



Island County Sheriff Office – 5521 E. Harbor Road, Freeland

Coupeville Marshalls Office – City Hall 4 N.E. Seventh St., Coupeville

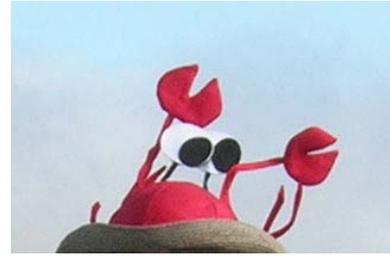
Oak Harbor Police Department 860 S.E. Barrington Drive, Oak Harbor

Please practice safe disposal of drugs no longer used - don't flush them!



Recreational Crabber Education

Education in Action



WSU Beach Watchers across northern Puget Sound partnered with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to educate recreational crabbers about ways to reduce derelict crab pots and increase the crab population – what’s not to like? Every year lost crab pots continue to catch and kill 100,000’s of pounds of wasted harvestable crab – last year alone the estimate is more than 300,000 pounds! This year WA DFW began enforcing use of 100% cotton cord to close crab pot doors. This simple strategy shortens the length of time a lost pot will continue to kill - from possibly years, if the door is closed with plastic or synthetic ties, to only weeks – when cotton cord will deteriorate and allow the door to open.

Island County Beach Watchers were aiming for a target of 1000 face to face contacts with recreational crabbers. At last count we topped 800 and not all the numbers are in yet.

We donned silly hats and engaged in lively discussions about crabbing. From boat launches at early hours, to community picnics and fairs and festivals, teams on both islands did a great job of covering the “waterfront” so to speak. Thanks to Dennis Nealon, Dave Brubaker, Ken Urstad, Gary Shuttack, Bob Gentz, Gary Skorheim, Gordon Marvin, Carol Kus, Linda McClure, Coyla and John Shepard and many others.



Coyla Shepard and Barbara Bennett (both BW Class of 2011) show off the crabber education hats at the Whidbey Fair.

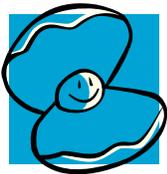
Barbara Bennett, BW Class of 2011



Digging for Dinner Applies Lessons Learned from Social Marketing Research

What Do People Care About When it Comes to Taking Care of Puget Sound?

Education in Action



People love to dig clams and eat them. Digging for Dinner (D4D), led by Beach Watcher Eugene Thrasher, has for years provided on-the-beach lessons to help wanna-be clambers on Whidbey Island join the ranks. Mixing good information with good humor, this popular program draws as many as 50 visitors to each lesson. From shellfish harvesting safety, to good recipes, to digging techniques for good stewardship, it's a winning program.

This summer, with funding from the Puget Sound Partnership EcoNet initiative, Eugene and his side-kick Beach Watcher Gary Rassner-Donovan used information gathered through social marketing to educate D4D participants about the important role they can play in helping Puget Sound stay healthy.

Last year, in an earlier phase of the same grant, Whidbey EcoNet invited local residents to answer one question: "What do you value about Puget Sound?" In addition to the beauty that surrounds us, they told us they care about:

- Local beaches where water is safe for swimming
- Being able to harvest or catch safe local seafood

Where's the common ground between these values and good stewardship? Water quality. Not everyone values ecosystem diversity, but these focus groups told us that a majority of local residents value swimmable beaches and edible seafood.

If our educational outreach through D4D can connect swimmable beaches and safe seafood with good marine water quality, we create a teachable moment to help individuals become good water quality stewards.

In a few minutes, people who came to dig clams can also learn that maintaining septic systems, reducing use of fertilizers and chemicals, minimizing storm water run off, and collecting all pet waste are things they can do to assure beaches stay swimmable and seafood stays harvestable right here! It's a win – win combination.



This year, D4D added information about water quality to their lessons and we asked participants what they learned. So far, the majority of responses learned that good marine water quality is linked to harvestable and safe clams to eat.

Next year, we aim for even clearer messages about steps each person can take to keep our marine waters healthy so we can all enjoy swimmable beaches and delicious local clams. We are learning how to make our messages clear and our audience is teaching us what they value and how well we are making the connections.

Be sure to check out this video of Eugene teaching about Digging for Dinner:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8JhlszyPuQ>

Barbara Bennett, BW Class of 2011



Where Are Our Whales?

Citizen Science in Action

Most of you know, during the summer months “our” Southern Resident Killer Whales (fish-eating whales), *Orcinus orca*, spend most of their time in and around the Salish Sea. They’ve been fairly predictable over the years, following their favorite food source - Chinook salmon – as the salmon return to the Fraser River (B.C.) to spawn. But 2013 has been significantly unpredictable.



Monika Wieland, a wildlife photographer, nature writer and marine naturalist, lives in Friday Harbor and is a true “Orca Watcher”. She has documented the SRKW visits this summer over a three-month period – July, August and September. Please read Monika’s fully detailed reports here:

<http://www.orcawatcher.com/>.

Some excerpts:

July 27th: The question “Where are the whales?” is a common one from not just tourists, but also among researchers, boat captains, naturalists, and all members of the whale-watch community. This year, however, the question: “where are the whales?” has taken on a different meaning among the whale watch community. It’s not just a curious question—it’s a sadder, more anxious question this year because, quite simply, the whales aren’t here.

Dr. Bob Otis, a retired professor from Ripon College, has been collecting killer whale data at Lime Kiln Lighthouse for 23 years. His numbers for this year show that over a period of 68 days (May 20th-July 27th) there have only been 17 “whale days”, the lowest since Bob started collecting data in 1990! (See Bob’s chart on Monika’s web page above) The underlying question of why the whales aren’t here in the first place? The answer is most likely an obvious one: there’s no fish here for them to eat.

August 24th: No Southern Resident Killer Whales were seen in the Salish Sea from July 20 to August 7, an unusually lengthy absence during the summer months. On August 7th a somewhat surprising group of whales returned to the west side of San Juan Island - the L54 matriline along with orphaned boys L88 Wave-walker and L84 Nyssa (6 whales). Starting on August 11 all members of J-, K-, and L-Pods (80+ whales) made a brief visit to the Salish Sea, the first of several. Each time, they have stayed **less than 48 hours**. We expect all three pods to be traveling together as we approach fall, but the consensus is there must not be enough fish (Chinook) here to sustain them all for more than about a day.

September 27th: After July and August were dismal in terms of SRKW sightings around San Juan Island, it didn’t take long into September for things to change. On September 3rd, all three pods returned and Southern Residents were seen in inland waters for the next twelve days straight. From September 16th they were gone for a few days, but returned before long and made their first foray into Puget Sound for the fall on September 21st. Since then, the only day without Residents was the 24th. (Report dated September 27th.)

Continued...



Where Are the Whales? (... continued)



The Residents are making regular trips up to the Fraser River, sometimes staying up there for a day or two foraging. Checking back in with the Albion Chinook test catch fishery on the lower Fraser River (<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/docs/commercial/albionchinook-quinnat-eng.html>), it's no surprise the whales have been here more: there's also been more fish.

It will be interesting to see what the next few weeks bring. Will there continue to be a late season salmon surge, keeping the whales around later into the fall than some years? Will they start going down into Puget Sound more regularly? Or will they take off again to waters unknown? Only time will tell.” *Thank you Monika for your in-depth information.*

Fall is when, historically, the Southern Residents head into Puget Sound after Chum salmon and Black-mouth, so be sure to watch along the west side of Whidbey Island. If you should see those big black fins out there, please call Orca Network (1-866-ORCANET) to report the location, time of day, and which direction the whales are heading, **OR** post a report on Orca Network’s facebook page with the same information. If reported in “real time”, others will have the opportunity to head to a land-based viewpoint to also see our Pacific Northwest icons.

Jill Hein, BW Class of 2005

Outdoor Classroom Volunteer Teachers Needed

Education in Action

The Outdoor Classroom (Whidbey Watershed Stewards) offers school age children memorable experiences while learning about their environment. We rely on volunteers like you to help teach the lessons that make this memorable experience happen. Be part of this enriching experience for students in our local community. We provide the lesson plans, training and tools to ensure your success.

The teaching sessions are Tuesday-Friday from September 24th-October 30th depending on when classes sign up to come. We ask that you teach one small-group lesson a week, morning (10:00-12:00) or early afternoon (12:30-2:30). Volunteers choose their teaching times.

This Fall, students, along with volunteer teachers, will be learning about the food web. We will explore producers in the forest, investigate soil and discover how interconnected we all are to our environment.

To become a volunteer teacher, contact Education Coordinator, Lori O'Brien at: octeacher@whidbeywatersheds.org or [360-579-1272](tel:360-579-1272). The classroom is located at 7015 Maxwelton Rd, Clinton. Lunch and good conversation provided!



SOUND WATERS



February 1, 2014 ~ What's Shaking?

Education in Action

Already the team is hard at work on next February's Sound Waters. The goal of this event is to educate residents about a wide array of environmental issues AND to raise funds to support the Beach Watchers program. Last year, Sound Waters contributed \$15,000 to the program.

Our **keynote address** will be by Bill Steele, Director of Outreach Information Services for the Pacific Northwest Seismograph Network, and Public Information Officer for both the PNSN and for many USGS earthquake related research activities. Always a popular presenter at past events, as keynoter, Bill will expand his presentation on earthquakes to talk about possible impacts on Island County, especially about a Cascadia Fault eruption. After last year's Ledgewood slide, there is high interest in the stability of our islands. In addition to the keynote, classes on the Ledgewood experience will be offered in addition to 60+ others on topics about this special place we call home.

Location, location, location. Both North and South have their wonderful advantages, and the team will be alternating venues every couple of years. February 1, 2014, Sound Waters will return to Oak Harbor High School (such a great Exhibits hall!). In 2015 we will return to South Whidbey High School (with its perfect auditorium). Coupeville is nicely centered mid-island, but sadly is too small (ah, the price of success, we must accommodate 500-600 people).

It's not too late to join the Team; we will have five more meetings before the event; come join the fun! All volunteers are welcome, but we especially need help for these areas:

- **Fund Raising** – Bob Gentz, Team Treasurer, needs a few tactful assistants to approach prior donors (Puget Sound Energy, Whidbey/Tel, etc.) about making donations to Sound Waters again this year. No cold calls, thankfully.
- **Website Support** – Do you have programming and web development experience? Connie Clark does a magnificent job managing our website but she would love some back-up support.

But you never write! If you would like to mail an actual physical postcard about Sound Waters to friends, family, neighbors, co-workers or book club buddies, just pick up a free postcard at your local library.

Attend with a friend! Gift certificates for a Sound Waters registration will be available in time for holiday giving. Do you have a friend or family member who would enjoy this special day? Each gift certificate costs \$50 for a regular registration, and includes a lovely certificate and brochure. For \$60 you can buy your friend lunch as well. To order your gifts, simply email Julie Ward, djnward1@yahoo.com

**** Save the date: February 1, 2014 ****

Linda-Ade Ridder, BW Class of 2005

Julie Ward, BW Class of 2011



WSU Island County Beach Watchers Class of 2013

Education In Action



Fall Training launched on October 2 with a tour of Penn Cove Mussels and the Admiralty Head Light House, Fort Casey and the Waste Wise Compost demonstration site at the lighthouse.

This year's class has scheduled two field trips, one to the Elwha dam removal at Olympic National Park and one along the Stillaguamish River to the Brenner Hatchery and restoration at Port Susan.

The Elwha trip was complicated by the national government shut-down, and could only take place if the government was up and running again by the time of the field trip.

All Beach Watchers are welcome to join class sessions as space allows. Contact Stinger Anderson at the WSU Island County main office to confirm space: stinger.anderson@wsu.edu or 360.240.5558

The full training schedule is here:

<http://county.wsu.edu/island/nrs/beachwatchers/Documents/BW%20Training%20.2013.Fall.for%20release.9.26.pdf>

Barbara Bennett, BW Class of 2011



Here is a web site of an amazing diver/photographer (marine biologist?) who has and is still photographing marine life around Whidbey Island.

Not only are the pictures fabulous, but he identifies all the organisms he photographs with Latin and common names. My daughter Milda sent this site to me.



<http://jankocian.smugmug.com>

Kes Tautydas, BW Class of 2011



Beach Cleanup Schedule

Volunteers In Action



Friday, October 18:

Double Bluff County Park (meet in parking lot near fence entry), 10:00 am - 12:00 noon

Friday, October 25:

Keystone Spit West ("T" Entry A, this entry is 0.6 miles east of Keystone Café.), 3:00 - 5:00 pm

Friday, November 1:

Joseph Whidbey State Park (gravel parking, W Crosby Road & West Beach Rd), 10:00 am - noon

Friday, November 7:

Keystone Spit East ("T" Entry B), 10:00 am - noon

Friday, November 15:

Ft. Casey State Park (meet at campground entry to beach), 10:00 am - noon

Friday, November 22:

Double Bluff County Park (meet in parking lot near fence entry), noon – 2 pm

Friday, November 29:

Keystone Spit West ("T" Entry A, this entry is 0.6 miles east of Keystone Café.), 9:00 – 11:00 am

Friday, December 6:

Ebey's Landing State Park Road End (S. Ebey Road and Hill Road), 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Friday, December 13:

Deception Pass State Park (West Beach parking lot), 9:00 - 11:00 am

Friday, December 20:

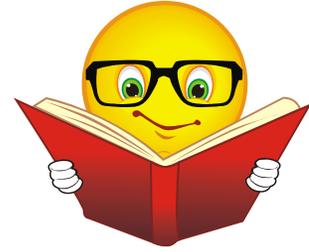
Joseph Whidbey State Park (gravel parking, W Crosby Road & West Beach Rd), 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Stinger Anderson, Beach Cleanup Coordinator



Whidbey BW Book Club

Education In Action



The Beach Watchers Naturalist Book Group will meet next on Tuesday, October 22, from 6-8 p.m., at the Freeland Library. Our selection for October will be “The Forest Unseen”, by George Haskell. Summaries for the October and November selections are noted below. “The Forest Unseen” was published to rave reviews, and was a finalist for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize. The book also received numerous honors including the 2013 Reed Award for Environmental Writing and the 2013 Best Book Award from the National Academies. Don’t miss this opportunity to read and discuss one scientist’s deep journey into a small space.

October Book: “The Forest Unseen: A Year’s Watch in Nature”, by George Haskell

Written with remarkable grace and empathy, *The Forest Unseen* is a grand tour of nature in all its profundity. Biologist David George Haskell uses a one-square-meter patch of old-growth Tennessee forest as a window onto the entire natural world. Visiting it almost daily for one year to trace nature's path through the seasons, he brings the forest and its inhabitants to vivid life. Beginning with simple observations--a salamander scuttling across the leaf litter, the first blossom of spring wildflowers--Haskell spins a brilliant web of biology, ecology, and poetry, explaining the science binding together ecosystems that have cycled for thousands--sometimes millions--of years.

November Book: “The Living Shore”, by Rowan Jacobsen

(Note: In November, the BW Naturalist Book Group will meet on Tuesday, November 26, 6-8 p.m., at the Freeland Library)

In the 1990s, a marine scientist named Brian Kingzett was commissioned to survey Canada's western coast. He saw amazing sights, from the wildest, most breathtaking coasts to the smallest of marine creatures. Along the western side of Vancouver Island, Kingzett nosed into an isolated pocket beach where he found something unusual. Amid the mussels, barnacles, and clams were round oysters--Olympias. Kingzett noted their presence and paddled on. A decade later when he met Betsy Peabody, executive director of the Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF), he learned that this once ubiquitous native oyster was in steep decline, and he knew that together they would return to this remote spot. Rowan Jacobsen, along with Kingzett, Peabody, and a small group of scientists from PSRF and the Nature Conservancy, set out last July to see if the Olys were still surviving--and if they were, what they could learn from them. The goal: to use their pristine natural beds, which have probably been around for millennia, as blueprints for the habitat restoration efforts in Puget Sound. The implications are vast. If Peabody and her team can bring good health back to Puget Sound by restoring the intertidal zones--the areas of land exposed during low tide and submerged during high tide, where oysters live--their research could serve as a model for saving the world's oceans. During a time when the fate of the oceans seems uncertain, Rowan Jacobsen has found hope in the form of a small shelled creature living in the lost world where all life began.

If you need additional information about the book group, please contact Kelly Keith keith@whidbey.com or Joanna Snow Cruse joannasnow@whidbey.net.

Kelly Keith, BW Class of 2013



Upcoming Beach Watchers Events



Advisory Council Meetings

Oct 22, 10AM-Noon, Deception Pass State Park Administration Office

Nov 21, 10AM-4PM Strategic Planning, Mt Vernon WSU office

Remember that the Log is only a small snapshot/outline for events. For the complete picture and details, please visit our events calendar at:

<http://beachwatchers.net/web/>

Camano Island

2013 Steering Committee Schedule, Wednesdays, 9:30 am

Oct 30, Nov 27

2013 Monthly Membership Meeting Schedule, Mondays, 9 - noon

Nov 4, Dec 2

Oct 23, West Coast Shellfish Farming, 7 PM, Camano Multi-Purpose Center (the Blue Building)

Oct 30, BW class 2013 graduation, 9AM-3PM, Deception Pass State Park

Jan 16, Annual All BW Meeting, details TBA

Whidbey Island

2013 Steering Committee Schedule, Mondays 10-noon (Day Rd. Fire Hall)

Nov 5

2013 Monthly Membership Meeting Schedule, Mondays 10-noon (venues vary, see page 12)

Oct 21, Nov 18, no meeting in December

2013 2nd Friday BW Breakfast Schedule (Neil's Clover Patch), 8:30AM-10AM

Nov 8, Dec 13

2013 Book Club Schedule (Freeland Library)

Oct 22, Nov 26 (see page 10 for details)

Oct 29, SW planning, 9AM-3PM, Ingri's Nordic Room

Oct 30, BW class 2013 graduation, 9AM-3PM, Deception Pass State Park

Nov 12, SW planning, 10AM-12PM, Ingri's Nordic Room

Dec 12, Whidbey BW Holiday Party 5:30 – 9PM, at Nordic Lodge, one mile south of Coupeville, at 63 Jacobs Road. Details TBA.

Jan 16, Annual All BW Meeting, details TBA

Further Afield

Oct 26, Port Susan Open House, 9AM-12PM at the Tulalip Administration Building

Nov 9, Snohomish BW Sound Living, 8AM-4PM, Everett Community College



We Invite You to Join Us

for the Monthly

Whidbey Beach Watchers Meetings!

Monday, October the 21st - Our featured speaker will be:

Adam Lorio he is the Natural Resource Technician/Outreach Coordinator for the Samish Indian Nation. He is passionate about connecting people to the places we live, using natural and cultural history. He is working with the Samish Indian community to integrate traditional knowledge into natural resource preservation and restoration projects.

Monday, November the 18th. Our featured speaker will be:

Dr. Mahmoud Abdel-Monem Plastics: Environmental and Human Health impacts.

Wifire Café

1651 E Main St, Freeland, WA 98249 10:00am-12:00pm

Remember friends don't let friends miss the Monthly BW Meetings!

Bring a BW Buddy who has never attended before and get a prize!

2013 BWAC Members

Tom Vos (W)-President; Janet Kramer (C)-Vice President; Loran Blankenship (C), Pam Cooper (C), Kathy Fritts (W), Nicole Luce (W), Kes Tautvydas (W), Virginia Walton (W), Kelly Zupich (W)

Beach Log Team

Managing editor: Joanne McMillen, BW Class of 2011

Associate editors: Julie Ward, BW Class of 2011; Jill Hein, BW Class of 2005; Barbara Bennett, BW class of 2011



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



PugetSoundPartnership
our sound, our community, our chance

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



ISLAND COUNTY EXTENSION



DEADLINE FOR NEXT BEACH LOG
November 18