

Educating the Next Generation of Covenant Monitors

By Torrey Archer
Covenant Manager

TLC's Covenant Program got off to an early start this year. In March, board member Briony Penn and I attended the Gulf Islands Conservation Conference 2016, hosted by the Mayne Island Conservancy Society. Twenty-six different environmental education organizations, land trusts and marine conservancies spent two days learning how each group was furthering conservation efforts. We were encouraged by the dedication and perseverance our environmental community shares.

Building our community, TLC joined forces with the Nanaimo Area Land Trust (NALT) in training environmental geography students from Vancouver Island University (VIU). Staff trained students both in a classroom session and in the field atop beautiful Mt. Benson, recently protected by NALT.

The season kick-off was celebrated during our Mother's Day BBQ co-hosted by the Greater Victoria Green Team (GVGT) and LifeCycles Project Societies' Welland Legacy Park & Community Orchard. Music by the high-energy Zimbabwean marimba band Chikoro Marimba filled the air while children feasted on barbeque and adults enjoyed a cold brew, all donated by local businesses. This was our volunteer shout-out to get the good times going – a full season of covenant monitoring and restoration was ahead.

TLC volunteers joined forces again with the GVGT and the Highlands District Community Association during a weekend-

long Scotch broom bash in the Highlands region. Volunteers removed broom from public roadsides, the community hall, and covenanted and private land, amassing an incredibly large pile at the end of the weekend of roughly 1,200 m³. The seed free broom was chipped, mixed with manure and left to create compost that will be used in the community garden.

TLC volunteers and I also partnered with the Capital Regional District (CRD) to remove St. John's Wort from the covenanted Atkins Road Park near Thetis Lake. We were able to unite with the Meditation Club and the Sustainability and Leadership Communities at the University of Victoria to remove ivy, holly and daphne from Cunningham Woods.

The covenant monitoring season saw 217 volunteers take part in a combined 880 hours of hiking, removing invasive species, documenting ecological inventories, repeating and establishing photo points to track landscape change, and enjoying the fruits of our labour – whether it was the incredible view or actual fruit from Welland Legacy Park & Community Orchard. Volunteers trekked up mountains, bushwhacked through dense brush, enjoyed hiking trails, removed litter and even spotted species at risk!

Want to get involved? Upcoming work parties include returning to the Atkins Road Covenant with the CRD November 5th and December 17th. We will be continuing our Scotch broom removal efforts in the Highlands next spring, as well as restoration at the Ayum Creek Park Covenant in Sooke. We are always looking



Volunteers practice monitoring a rocky outcrop dominated by Douglas-fir, arbutus and mosses. Photo credit Torrey Archer.



Greater Victoria Green Team and TLC volunteers pose for a quick pic after a day of restoration work. Photo credit Amanda Evans.



TLC Covenant Manager Torrey Archer (in red) teaching VIU students. Photo credit Janie Dubman.

for enthusiastic people to come out and lend a helping hand. So, don't be shy – you always learn something new when you get people together. RSVP by email to covenants@conservancy.bc.ca. ■

Success in Our Sustainable Approach

Since my last update in our summer edition of the LANDmark we have had two further triumphs in our restructuring process. The Supreme Court of B.C. has approved our transfers of Lohbrunner Farm and the Historic Joy Kogawa House.

Our Plan of Arrangement, and the successful completion of the CCAA process, is dependent on the completion of three further transactions. We look forward to sharing these successes with you in the near future.

As this LANDmark goes to print we have just held our 2016 Annual General Meeting. We presented our audited Financial Statements to the membership. Our last fiscal year, running from May 1, 2015, to April 30, 2016, showed progress in balancing our operational budget. We are on track to have another sustainable year ahead

while strengthening our conservation efforts.

This is one shining example of just how far the organization has come in the past few years. While we are not yet at the end of our restructuring efforts, our hard-work and resiliency is paying off.

Our success is because of Members like you. Because of your support, TLC was able to successfully monitor our portfolio of conservation covenants, host and partner with other groups to perform important restoration events to remove invasive species and educate our communities about the importance of covenants and monitoring.

In this LANDmark you will read more about covenant monitoring with our many hard-working volunteers, the opportunity to support Abkhazi Garden through a matching grant and our

ongoing work to protect new ecosystems through covenants.

As we look to the year ahead, I am grateful for your continued support. Together TLC Members, donors, volunteers and partners can accomplish anything!

Cathy Armstrong
Executive Director



ATKINS ROAD COVENANT WORK PARTY
NOV 5 & DEC 17
Volunteer with TLC & CRD to help remove invasive species
RSVP by calling 1-877-485-2422

Creditor Process Wrap Up

By Dianna Stenberg
Communications & IT Manager

With the Supreme Court of B.C. approval of the transfer of the Historic Joy Kogawa House, TLC is nearing the end of the *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act* (CCAA) process.

On October 28th the Court sanctioned the sale of Joy Kogawa's childhood home to the City of Vancouver for \$634,000. The transfer closed on November 1st.

The City will be entering into a lease agreement with the Historic Joy Kogawa House Society to manage the site and provide programming including literary

events and the Writers-in-Residence Program for visiting authors.

"The Kogawa board supports the transfer of the Historic Joy Kogawa House from TLC to the City of Vancouver," said Ann-Marie Metten, Executive Director of the Historic Joy Kogawa House Society.

The remaining three transactions in TLC's Plan of Arrangement are the transfer of Wildwood Ecoforest, 6% undivided interest in Maltby Lake and the densities zoned on Abkhazi Garden.

TLC has scheduled a creditor meeting for early December to seek their final approval on the revised Plan of Arrangement and the organization's exiting of CCAA.

With a favourable vote at the meeting, TLC may be exiting the creditor protection process before the New Year. ■

Matching Grant Supports Updates to Abkhazi Garden

By Mara Hawkins
Member & Donor Care Manager

Abkhazi Garden had a wonderful season this year which was highlighted by over 3,600 volunteer hours from our dedicated gardeners, gate greeters and docents. The volunteer gardeners are led by our Head Gardener Jo, who harnesses the collective experience and knowledge of the group to gently direct the evolution of the trees, shrubs and flowers that have made their home there.

In the spring TLC launched the successful **#30for30more** campaign. Through the generous support of lovers of the Garden, we were able to begin repairs on key projects such as fencing, handrails, stone work on stairways, and pruning of overgrown oak trees.

The **#30for30more** campaign also garnered the attention of The Daglish Family Foundation who is willing to match \$20,000 in donations to Abkhazi Garden; the donations must be collected between September 2016 and the end of May 2017.

The opportunity of the matching grant, and the continuing help of supporters like you, will be directed to the repair and resurfacing of the patio next fall.

Interested in donating to Abkhazi Garden to help us meet our goal of \$40,000 with the matching grant? Fill out the donation form provided or visit our website at conservancy.bc.ca.

The Garden welcomed thousands of visitors from all around the world and from the local community this year. Many locals return week after week during the summer months to enjoy the different blooms. The fall months are just as beautiful and provide avid botanists and gardeners the quiet solitude of the winding paths, art displays and rare plant life. **Abkhazi Garden and Teahouse are open Wednesday through Sunday throughout the fall and winter from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Be sure to come for a visit and enjoy the history and beauty that love built. ■



Above: Abkhazi Garden displays the change in seasons. Photo credit Andrew MacKinnon.

Below: Oak trees reflected in the pond. Photo credit Dennis Robinson.



Lohbrunner Farm Transfers to FarmFolk/CityFolk

On September 26th, the Supreme Court of B.C. approved the transfer of Lohbrunner Farm to the FarmFolk/CityFolk Society. The agreement includes a covenant held by TLC to protect the property as a farm.

The transfer to the Society recovered \$200,000 in debt forgiveness and \$300,000 in direct funds to pay TLC's creditors as part of the CCAA process.

TLC received Lohbrunner Farm and Bird Sanctuary in 2007 through the gift of a life estate from Norma Lohbrunner. Having lived on the 40-acre estate since marrying her husband in 1945, Norma fought to ensure the farm

continued. Norma passed away in 2011, but a dedicated group of TLC volunteers continue to care for the agricultural fields.

“We are thrilled that our volunteers will be able to continue to be active on the farm,” said Cathy Armstrong, TLC Executive Director. “The Lohbrunner family is pleased to have been kept apprised of negotiations and to have continued access.”

TLC previously transferred the Bird Sanctuary portion of the estate to the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

“Having met Norma in the early days, when she was considering donating her land, I know that she would be pleased

that both the birds and the farming will continue to be protected in perpetuity,” said Heather Pritchard, FarmFolk/CityFolk Society. ■



Lohbrunner Farm was successfully transferred to the FarmFolk/CityFolk Society this fall. Photo credit Jill Patterson.

Mourning a Dedicated Volunteer

Days before our 2016 Annual General Meeting I sadly learned of the passing of Jack Eldridge. A TLC Member and dedicated volunteer at Abkhazi Garden, Jack has touched the lives of so many in our community.

Jack's life made me reflect on the incredible value of volunteers to TLC, to natural systems and to the value that volunteers add to organizations and to communities, both human and ecological.

I think of TLC's Covenant Program and the connections Torrey Archer has made with other organizations. Training volunteers in monitoring as well as invasive species removal - so many hours this year alone. Many hands make lighter (one certainly could not say "light") work.

Volunteerism leads to identifying places with special importance to ecology, such as Ayum Creek, and to cultural values such as the Hardy Mountain Doukobor Village, and of course Abkhazi Garden.

In Chemainus, Jack donated his interest in a river-front property to TLC to ensure that it would become protected as parkland in the Cowichan Valley Regional District. Last year we were able to assist him in achieving his vision for the property.

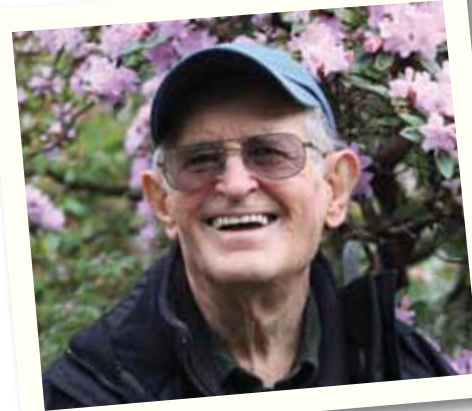
When asked about why he donated Jack said that he wanted to do whatever he could to protect the natural world for the benefit of his family and others.

Jack Eldridge epitomizes volunteerism on so many levels. He was hands-on with the projects he loved. He had vision. He searched out ways to accomplish that vision and then made it happen.

Jack will be greatly missed by all of us at TLC, and especially by our Abkhazi Garden volunteers who worked with him so closely. Our condolences go out to his family and friends.

With caring thoughts,

Frances Pugh
Co-Chair, Board of Directors



Top: The late Jack Eldridge. Photo credit Dennis Robinson. Bottom: Jack volunteering at Abkhazi Garden in 2000. Photo TLC files.

TLC Bylaw Amendments Pass at AGM

For those who were unable to attend the Annual General Meeting in person, TLC's audited Financial Statements and Annual Report are available on our website or our office.

I am pleased to share that after a favourable vote at our AGM, our revised Bylaws will be registered with the Registrar of Societies after the updated *Societies Act* takes effect.

Important details that TLC Members will not want to overlook include the change to memberships expiring 30 days following the notice of dues owing being sent and the change to bestow voting rights to new TLC Members 45 days after signing up. Please contact our office with any questions you have about the changes.

With the Bylaws up to date, Board and staff will be working to ensure our policies and procedures are documented and reflect the organization's restructuring.

On behalf of the Board, I wish to thank you for your support and encouragement throughout our restructuring efforts.

Yours in Conservation,

Tom Watson
Co-Chair, Board of Directors

Board of Directors

Mel Lehan ■ Fred Newhouse

Briony Penn ■ Frances Pugh

Lori Roter ■ Fran Sloan Sainas ■ Tom Watson

TLC is honoured to be the recipient of donations in memory of:

John W. Edwards, Isabelle Hare and Rob Nelson.