

2018
Annual Report



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President's Message

During 2018, Transition Fidalgo & Friends (TF&F) continued working toward our goals of decreasing fossil-fuel dependence and increasing community and personal resilience in the face of rapid change.

In April, our group took a big step forward by putting on FutureFest, a two-day happening at the Transit Shed Event Center. This community-focused project was created to help inspire people about their ability to positively affect the future. Nearly 200 people attended.

FutureFest birthed two new projects: the Anacortes Community Forest Land Monitoring project, and the TFF LION project (Local Investment Opportunity Network). TF&F has committed to providing \$5000 for the first year of the ACFL Monitoring project.

Our monthly presentations, the Anacortes Community Gardens, Fidalgo and Guemes Gleaners (FIGG), and Fix-It Days continued helping to raise our community's awareness and resilience through 2018.

In July, we were sorry to say goodbye to our Administrative Assistant, Mary Beth Conlee, who so ably shepherded us for several years. We were fortunate to find another highly-qualified person who has our mission very much at heart ---Jack Hartt.

July brought another big change as we transitioned to a new monthly meeting format. This was prompted by phone surveys gauging people's interest in continuing the Seventh Generation Suppers. Survey results showed a high regard for the presentations and a low need for the sup-

pers. Because of that, and to simplify what had become a good deal of work for too few people, the board decided to have only the presentations (now called "Gatherings").

In October, *The Catalyst*, edited by Evelyn Adams, changed its name and focus in light of the latest warning from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The monthly newsletter is now called *The Pathfinder*. Evelyn stated in a recent issue: "*The Pathfinder will explore how to live with uncertainty and how to strengthen ourselves to act in ways that serve a suffering Earth.*" I encourage you to forward *The Pathfinder* to your friends/relatives since it deserves broader distribution and readership.

Also in October, the story of how we created our *Vision 2030* document appeared on Transition's national website called "10 Stories of Transition in the US." See it at: <http://transitionus.org/stories/10-stories-transition-us-transition-fidalgo-friends%E2%80%99-vision-2030>

All of our board officers are new this year. Eric Shen stepped down from being president but continues to be a valuable voice on the board.

Ron Larsen retired years as treasurer per stepped for in that role. Bu president and a committee. Rog

The TF&F board is facing its own sustain: We've been ble equate funds o

of income from solar projects, generous donations, and carefully controlled expenditures. However, the solar income will soon be running out.

Consequently, we have revised our grant program to conserve funds. We've decided to discontinue the business incubator and community climate project grants, while keeping the Anacortes school system grant and the student scholarship. We are looking at fundraising ideas. Bottom line about our bottom line: we need to get serious about fundraising. The urgency of climate change demands that we ramp up our projects and involvement in furthering our mission.

I mentioned earlier the latest IPCC report, which notes that the world has only a decade or so to essentially transform civilization to avoid catastrophic warming. That gives a new urgency to our mission and reaffirms our resolve to help our community not only prepare, but do its part to meet this unprecedented challenge.

Richard Bergner
Board President



Fidalgo Forest Monitoring Project

*By Roger Fuller, Board Member
Photos provided by Jonn Lunsford*

Why should we monitor forests? The Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL) are a defining feature of our community and key to our sense of place. How many small towns can boast of a 2,800 acre forest reserve, with 50 miles of trails literally out our back door?

The ACFL is changing, as it has from its very beginning. Now, though, it faces a climate that has started changing at rates that will become faster than ecosystems, or humans, have ever experienced.

Transition Fidalgo & Friends is starting a new citizen science project to monitor change in the ACFL. We have three objectives:

- (1) to get to know our forest better** (we care for things that we know more intimately);
- (2) to document current conditions** and then to track how the forest is responding and changing; and
- (3) to make that data available** to researchers and land managers, so that we learn how forests respond and if/how we can help them adapt more successfully.

Climate change is a global challenge unfolding over many decades. Its vast scale across both space and time can make it difficult to understand or observe. By studying our



local forest, we can make both the challenges and the solutions to climate change a tangible reality for our community.

We've secured a Memorandum of Agreement with the City of Anacortes, and plan to launch our new project in the spring of 2019. This is a volunteer-led effort, guided by an advisory board that includes experts in forest ecology, resource management, and the administration of volunteer programs. We'll need many volunteers to ensure success. And not just people who want to study the forest, but also those interested in data entry, education, recording people's stories, writing articles about forest critters, organizing and contacting volunteers, and many other tasks.

We'll also need donations to make this work. While this is a volunteer-led project, the management of a swarm of volunteers and a blizzard of data takes dedicated time from a part-time paid volunteer manager. We're exploring different scenarios, but all will involve some cost.

We hope that community members who value the ACFL will support this program both as volunteers and as donors.





Transition Lopez, MONA, the Anacortes Music Project, the Skagit Climate Science Consortium, the Anacortes Arts Festival, Transmedia Vision, Friends of the Forest, the Anacortes Food Co-op, the Center for Happiness, and eight local organizations working with citizen scientists.

By Evelyn Adams
Board Member Emeritus

There's no denying we live in unprecedented, heart-wrenching times.

In the midst of climate meltdown and a sixth mass extinction, many are feeling hopeless and in despair that they can make a difference for the good. That realization is what drove us to create FutureFest, an

Around 200 people attended this first-time event. Keynote speaker Sarah van Gelder, co-founder of Yes Magazine, talked about "The Revolution Where You Live— Stories From a 12,000 Mile Journey Through a New America". Vicki Robin, author of the international best-seller *Your Money or Your Life*, brought the weekend to an inspiring close. Workshops included "Strengthening our local economy through community-sourced funding and co-ops", "Homes for all: how do we get there?", "Artful Living: exploring the role of creativity in resilient communities", "Regenerative resistance: facing the mess we're in without going crazy", "The Future needs you: citizen science in a rapidly changing world", and "Where do we go from here?"



To help stoke the fires of imagination and creativity, we included an art show, the "Grove of Life", the "Qube", the "Walk of Why Not?", a luminary parade, the Tempestry Project, a graffiti wall, a song-writing

event on Earth Day weekend, April 21-22, at the Transit Shed Event Center.

With FutureFest, we resolved to bring our community together to call up our best thinking and creativity to bring the world we want into being. We aimed to remind people they have great things within themselves and that now is the time to do great things.

Nine months of effort resulted in a free weekend of information, art, music, fun, film, and beauty as a way of capturing people's imaginations and inspiring them to work for change. Evelyn Adams, Rich Bergner, Mary Beth Conlee, and Roger Fuller were the organizing committee for an event that drew on the talents of over 50 volunteers, and included organizations such as



contest, and a forest immersion walk. We also had live music, a Happiness Cafe, and food vendors.

What did FutureFest achieve?

For one thing, we were glad to broaden our reach in our own and surrounding communities by working with many different organizations and individuals. For another, we gained some good projects. A new TF&F

effort, the ACFL Monitoring Project, was introduced at the event and interested nearly two dozen volunteers in helping to bring it to life.



Another TF&F project, the TFF Local Investment Opportunity Network, was spurred by the economy workshop and materialized this autumn. There was also strong interest in the citizen science opportunities presented by various groups, as well as in learning more about regenerative resistance, which we are following up on by starting a group to help increase personal resilience.



The impact of FutureFest is difficult to measure. Although we're happy to see some tangible results of our efforts, we really can't know how many seeds were sown that will bear fruit. A few people decided to take a leap with FutureFest, and we'll always be grateful to the TF&F Board for taking a chance and supporting us wholeheartedly. We worked exceedingly hard to set the

stage for good things to happen, and in the end we can only hope and trust that they will.



Fix-It Days

By Eric Shen
Board Member



This is the 7th year that Transition Fidalgo & Friends has held the popular Fix-It Day events at the Anacortes Farmers Market. Fix-It Days are a public service to our community where friends and neighbors bring their broken appliances, lamps, electronics, etc. to be repaired. In return for repairing an item, we ask that a donation be

made to our new partner, The Anacortes Family Center (AFC). The AFC's mission is to serve homeless women, children and families in crisis by providing shelter in addition to comprehensive transformational services to achieve long lasting personal success and self-sufficiency. The donations we generate are used by the AFC to maintain their facilities and programs.

A spin off of the Fix-It Days event is a program where the volunteers periodically go to the AFC facilities and do repairs that normally require engaging professional services. Avoiding the need to hire professionals saves the AFC's limited budget and also allows the donations made during Fix-It Days to be used for other needs.

For Transition Fidalgo & Friends, the Fix-It Days program is a two way win. First, we provide a way for people to avoid throwing away items that, in many cases, only need a simple repair, thus avoiding the need to purchase a replacement. Second, TF&F is able to support a successful program that helps with the growing homeless problems in our community. Our goal of creating a sustainable and resilient community will require solutions to both these problems.



Rise for Climate, Jobs, & Justice

By Evelyn Adams

On September 8,
Transition Fidalgo &

Friends participated in a nationwide event organized by the People's Climate Movement to draw attention to the climate crisis. Lyndon Greene, Bud Anderson, and John Morgan organized an educational event that included a well-attended demonstration on Commercial Avenue and several info tables to let people know the facts about the climate crisis and how they could help put a fee on big carbon polluters. We also had information available about the Ready for 100% Clean Energy campaign.



A comment from one of the volunteers at an info table: "98% of the responses we got were positive or at least open to investigation -- very encouraging. I am so proud of little Anacortes. One person I spoke with had come all

the way down from Bellingham because he couldn't find anything happening up there. WOW!!! Big kudos are due to our little community here!!"



From Suppers to Gatherings: Monthly TF&F Presentations

By Jack Hartt

For the past eight years, TF&F's monthly presentations have offered a smorgasbord of topics for people to feast and chew on. This year's lineup added to that menu.

The monthly presentations were called Seventh Generation Suppers for the first half of the year because the evening began with a jointly shared meal. Mid-summer this changed to simply having announcements followed by the feature presentation, which served as a meal of ideas for us to digest. These events are now called "Gatherings".

Two of this year's talks focused on issues we voted on in the November election. One challenged us to raise another issue for our community – banning single-use plastic bags. A few discussed natural science issues, from forests to wetlands to pollinators, and a couple applied these sciences to help us grow better gardens or study our environment for future knowledge.

One hard-hitting presenter, Dr. Bindschadler, took us to the ice caps and back to see our coming future in the stark light of reality. He returns for our first presentation in the coming year, *Earth's BiPolar Disorder*. This one is not to be missed!

Come be a part of these friendly gatherings at the Anacortes Senior Center, starting at 6:30 pm, on the last Tuesday of every month except for December.

Our 2018 TF&F Presentations:

- Blue Carbon: The role of eelgrass meadows, tidal wetlands, and carbon markets in mitigating climate change
- Jude Apple
- Skagit County's Clean Tech Sector: Exploring Trends and Opportunities
- Sean Connell, EDASC
- You, too, can be a Citizen Scientist!
- Betty Carlson
- FutureFest review/project planning
- Home Rule Skagit
- Sara Holahan, Margery Hite
- Water-wise Vegetables
- Jane Billinghamurst
- Attracting Pollinators
- Virgene Link
- Initiative 1631
- Andrew Eckels
- What Ice Sheets Hate and Why You Should Care
- Robert Bindschadler
- Thinking Outside the Plastic Bag
- Carol Sullivan
- The Future of Fidalgo's Forests
- Jack Hartt, Denise Crowe, Jonn Lunsford



Anacortes Community Gardens

*By Sylvia Cooper
Board Member*

It is hard to believe that 2018 was our tenth year of gardening at the 29th Street Community Garden.

This year was a very productive year. We distributed a total of 683 pounds of produce to the two local food banks (Anacortes 100 & Salvation Army) and the Anacortes Family Shelter. Produce included lettuce, tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, carrots, chard, kale, beets, peas and beans.

The two school gardens were also very productive and educational. The staff, students and parents enjoyed the fruits of their labor.

Great job to the gardeners and everyone who helped make this year so successful.



FIDALGO ISLAND & GUEMES GLEANERS (FIGG)

By Sylvia Cooper

This year started a little early and lasted a little longer. We gleaned every day for a full two months with many days having two gleans.

We had more volunteers and helpers to deliver the food to the food banks, churches, and the family shelter. Daily deliveries were made to the Anacortes Senior Center, which was a wonderful improvement this year. We had

close to no waste, and more students and families coming to get fruit from the I Avenue FIGG Stand. Usually we would have extra apples to make cider during the season; but this year there was no extra fruit for cider pressing. Although we missed making cider, this is a great problem to have as the fruit was being taken and used by members of our community.

This was our third year with the gleaning program. As the season was going on, we could tell it was going to be a big year. The prior two years combined totaled a little over 15,000 pounds; this year we distributed a total of 20,442 pounds. The generosity of the WSU Extension offices contributed to that increase, allowing us to harvest pie pumpkins and corn after their testing was done, which added up to a little over 3,100 pounds of produce.

Thank you to all who called on us to glean their trees – over 53 homeowners. And thank you to all of the volunteers, and to the great community we live in. Thank you for a very productive 2018 season!



Grants

*By Bud Anderson,
Board Member*

The Finance Committee has recommended that TF&F suspend the annual \$5,000 Business Incubator Grant and the annual \$5,000 Project Grant.

The funds for the grant program came from a one-time donation from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous. Those funds are largely expended or encumbered (on FutureFest, several community donations, the Forest monitoring project, etc) and the grant program will be closed.

This donation has enabled TF&F to accomplish many projects it would otherwise not been able to take on and we are grateful to our donor to making these projects possible. At this point, we are asking for your donations to continue to take on new projects and to continue the projects we are already working on.

TF&F is proposing to keep the \$1,000 Anacortes and Guemes School system scholarship grant and the \$1,000 Anacortes and Guemes School system project grant. Our Board meeting in December will look at this policy change.

Additionally, the Finance Committee has recommended a \$5,000 award to the Forest Monitoring Project that will document the environmental changes to our local forests.

TFF LION

Local Investing Opportunity Network

*By Eric Shen,
Board Member*

This year Transition Fidalgo & Friends started exploring the startup of a local lending group, one that focuses upon providing bridge funding opportunities for local businesses. In the current lending environment, new and young businesses are unable to obtain loans because of very strict loan restrictions. The lack of funding opportunities is limiting the start-up of businesses that would be assets to our community and vital to creating a diverse character to our town.

An informal group has come together to establish how this program will function. Though loans will be individual personal loans to budding businesses, the group hopes to host occasional meetings where entrepreneurs have the opportunity to meet people interested in supporting their business. From there, the parties can then arrange privately to talk further about forming business relationships.

This is a project that several TF&F members have wanted to explore for many years. We hope it is a project that our membership will embrace to create a community that reflects our vision for the future.

Anacortes Energy Fair

By John Morgan

Transition Fidalgo and Friends participated in the annual Anacortes Energy Fair on September 15 at the Anacortes Depot. The event is sponsored by Anacortes Community Energy.



Anacortes
Community
Energy

We had a table with information about renewable energy systems like wind, solar and wave energy, and about Initiative 1631, "Washington Wants Clean Air", which TF&F supported in many ways.

We were honored to also share the event with several folks promoting electric vehicles.

Who We Are



Back row: Eric Shen, Sequoia Ferrel, Heather Burke, Vice President Bud Anderson, Treasurer Sylvia Cooper

Front row: Secretary Roger Fuller, President Rich Bergner.

Board Member Bios:

Rich Bergner, President, is a former educator who is now a gardener/caretaker who enjoys promoting native plants. He started Fidalgo Backyard Wildlife Habitat in 2005 and worked with a dedicated group of volunteers to certify 600 yards as wildlife habitats. That grew into his involvement in climate change issues. He enjoys tennis, reading, strolling through his 6 acres of yard landscapes, and family---especially being with and being silly with his two young grandchildren, Marisol and Azuul.

Bud Anderson, Vice President, grew up in Bellevue and went to Washington State University where he graduated with BS and MS degrees in Electrical Engineering. Go Cougs! He went to work at the Shell Refinery in Anacortes as an electrical engineer and stayed there until retirement 44 years later. Currently, he operates an electrical contracting company and is extensively involved in building remodeling.

Roger Fuller, Secretary, is a habitat ecologist who coordinates a natural resource restoration and stewardship program, and studies how ecosystems

respond to climate change and restoration. He is particularly fascinated by estuaries and forests. He works at the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and is an Adjunct Professor at Western Washington University. He is also a member of the Skagit Climate Science Consortium.

Sylvia Cooper, Treasurer, has been involved with events and programs since the mid 80's, obtaining experience working with marathons, centennial celebrations, tournaments and the Olympics. She manages the community gardens in Anacortes and the FIGG gleaning program. She also recently became a Ham Radio operator, manages the West End Citizens patrol, mentors students at the Anacortes High School, and works for the City of Anacortes. Her hobbies include photography, golf, gardening and jewelry making. She has an autistic brother who stays with her half of the year, two very loving dogs, Picasa and Dakota and one cat named Puna. She has been on the board of TF&F since 2009.

Eric Shen is a retired mechanical engineer who spent his career in the research, design, and construction of energy generation systems. Since retiring, he has devoted himself to finding solutions that help our community address the impacts of climate change. He believes it is imperative to take steps now to avoid the dire future that will become reality if the people around the world do not dedicate themselves to reducing their carbon footprint.

Heather Burke was raised on a dairy farm in upstate New York. Graduating from the NY State of Agriculture, she went on to obtain a Masters in Biochemistry at Clark University. Interested in sustainable agriculture and healthy, locally grown whole foods, she stays active with the Anacortes Farmers Market and the Anacortes Food Coop.

Sequoia Ferrel has been an artist and designer, nature lover and peace activist among other things. As an avid gardener with great concerns for the future of the human race she developed a strong interest in issues of food security. To that end she started Gaia Rising Farm several years ago, to promote and educate about local, organic, and holistically raised food. She loves being part of the greater community and also spending time with friends, family and two amazing granddaughters.



“...to raise awareness and develop solutions to the challenges of climate change, energy uncertainty, and economic instability. Transition Fidalgo & Friends promotes a move away from fossil fuels through decreasing demand, increasing efficiency, supporting renewable energy, and fostering the local production of food, energy, and goods.”

Contact Us:

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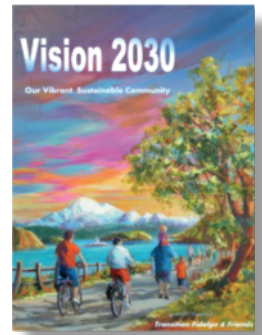
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Further Resources:

(These are available on our website for download.)

Vision 2030

At a meeting hosted by Transition Fidalgo & Friends, Fidalgo islanders from young adults to grandparents came together to visualize a community of the future that thrives despite the challenges of climate, energy, and economic upheaval. This document is a blueprint for change and a vision of Anacortes that we can make happen – together.



Living Well, Living Green

Living Well, Living Green in Skagit and Whatcom Counties – Wise Choices for a Warming World



The Pathfinder

(a monthly e-newsletter)

The Pathfinder explores “how to live with uncertainty and how to strengthen ourselves to act in ways that serve a suffering Earth.” Excellent reading.

You Can Help

Get informed: Study the resources above, and read the reports being released by the IPCC and other scientific studies. Visit our website and click on the LEARN tab.

Get involved: Join us at our monthly presentation gatherings; Sign up on our mailing list to receive updates of meetings, news, and local events.

Give time: Participate in local activities around Fidalgo. Help with the forest monitoring, with Fix-It Days, with gleanings, with gardens — or start a new endeavor!

Give financially: Help support TF&F as we sponsor local studies, food sharing efforts, educational activities, and everything else you see outlined in these pages. Become a member! Our website has a Donate button for your convenience.

Live low-carbon: We have twelve years to avoid drastic changes to our economy and culture. Each of us makes a difference.

- o Ask us how you can make your home energy efficient and reduce your carbon footprint
- o Buy only what you need
- o Reduce, reuse, repair, recycle (vs Buy)
- o Be food efficient- don't waste food
- o Bring your own bag for shopping
- o Walk, ride your bike, take the transit
- o Get more great ideas from *Living Well, Living Green!* (See our website)

Download or sign up for the resources listed above by going to our website:

www.TransitionFidalgo.org/learn



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