Director’s Message:
Powell Jones

With a little reflection it is easy to see that 2019 has already been an amazing year for the Dungeness River Audubon Center, and we are just getting started. With our excellent programs, loved park, and future expansion of the building, it is a great time to be involved with the River Center today and in the future.

The growth in our educational programs has been extraordinary and I am so excited about the direction it is headed. Did you know that our largest interpretative program is the River Center itself and the visitors we get on a daily basis? With our growth we have an increasing need for more volunteers to help greet visitors at the River Center. Please give us a call if you are interested.

By now you are probably aware that with the hard work of our members, partners, volunteers, and staff we have nearly reached our goal for expanding the River Center and are entering the last leg of our campaign. The potential for a new building is exciting in many ways. The increased opportunities for our work to impact people in more immersive displays and classes, while still serving our community with functional and inspiring spaces, is an incredible dream that is close to becoming reality. There is still time to be a part of something that will be truly spectacular, please give us a call if you are interested in helping us Close the Gap.

Please enjoy the Summer, our park, and come to enjoy some of our fantastic programs!

See you Soon!
Major Fundraising Milestone Reached to expand the Dungeness River Audubon Center!

The expansion and renovation of the Dungeness River Audubon Center is now very close, thanks to a generous grant of $1.5 million from a State Capital Budget Appropriation. The project is now at 90 percent of its total goal of approximately $3.6 million. The hard work of the River Center Capital Campaign Committee, generous contributions from members and the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribal Council, and recent grant funding by the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust and the First Federal Community Foundation have also been instrumental in this fundraising effort. A Close the Gap initiative has begun to raise the remaining funds through a combination of grants, fundraising events, and contributions from individuals and businesses.

Capital Campaign Chair Annette Hanson feels the achievement of the Legislature’s State Capital Budget appropriation is a validation of the importance of this project to our region. She says, “Representatives Steve Tharinger and Mike Chapman, and Senator Kevin Van De Wege really garnered support among other legislators. We are forever grateful for their leadership and representation, especially by Tharinger, Chair of the House Capital Budget Committee. Audubon Washington staff also provided great support and advice. I’m also thankful for the hard work by the campaign committee, staff, and partners.”

Tribal Chair and CEO W. Ron Allen says, “Our Tribe is very excited about this expansion of the Dungeness River Audubon Center. We have always felt that public education, including our cultural values of protecting and preserving the Dungeness River and the habitat it supports for the salmon, birds, and wildlife, is a critical part of building a deep appreciation of the connectivity of all life. The exhibit and classroom will be a new asset for our community.”

Center Director Powell Jones explains, “Expanding the Center will enhance our programing by increasing the facility’s capacity for visi-
tors to learn about and connect with nature, attend meetings, or relax without any conflicts for space. As an organization we are excited to explore and develop more programming not only for our local community but also for visitors to our area.”  

From Press Release written by Sue Dryden.

Next Steps and Project Details

Construction of a new entry road and parking lot off Hendrickson Road will begin this summer, and work on detailed architectural plans for the new building wing and remodel of the existing building is underway. Construction of the new wing will begin as soon as the funding goal is complete. The building expansion and remodel of the existing Dungeness River Audubon Center will improve the learning environment, serve more people, create a safer and more visible entry, and increase efficiency for staff and volunteers. The project kicked off publicly on June 22, 2018 with a celebration at the proposed new entrance to Railroad Bridge Park. The project also includes a parking lot, and improved access to the Olympic Discovery Trail.

How to Contribute

To contribute and learn more about the campaign, including a video, visit www.dungenessrivercenter.org. Close the Gap campaign volunteers are looking for groups interested in hearing more about the project. Contact Capital Campaign Chair Annette Hanson at 360-670-6774.

Golf Tournament

The first Close the Gap event was the Dungeness River Audubon Center Charity Golf Tournament on June 15th. The four-person scramble golf tournament was held at The Cedars at Dungeness Golf Course, with a cost of $100 per player, and including prizes and lunch. A lot of fun was had by all, and we enjoyed a delicious luncheon served by the Cedars. A special thank you to the Jamestown S’Kallam Tribe for their generous use of the Cedars at Dungeness and Garrett Smithson and his staff there for all their help. The "team" that put the tournament on was Tuttie Peetz, Annette Nesse, Wanda Schneider and Garrett Smithson. This year’s event proceeds were part of the Capital Campaign, and we plan to make this an annual event, with future funds going to Operations.

We just received the latest preliminary numbers for the tournament, and we CLEARED $24,995. Needless to say, we are thrilled and excited with these results, especially for our first year. This is a nice “building block” in our Close the Gap stage of the CC. Tuttie Peetz.

Volunteer table at banquet

Nesse Golf Team on the Greens
FUNDRAISING EVENTS:

Dine on the Dungeness: A Fundraiser to support the Dungeness River Audubon Center and Railroad Bridge Park

The Dungeness River Audubon Center is hosting the 5th annual dinner on the historic bridge in Railroad Bridge Park, 2151 W. Hendrickson Road, in Sequim. This event is sure to please all the senses: whether you are a nature lover, a foodie, an appreciator of historic architecture or just looking for a unique way to spend an evening, everyone will want to participate in this event open to a limited number of guests each year. Join us for this unique opportunity where fine dining meets the Dungeness River, atop the historic Dungeness River railroad trestle bridge. This intimate gathering has become a tradition among participants because of the unforgettable view, the everlasting impressions and the delectable experience of dining on one of the last remaining ‘timber Howe through truss’ railroad bridges in Washington. New this Year: we will have a photographer on site for photos with the river and the mountains in the background for purchase. So dress to impress! You know you could use a new photo on the mantel or for your holiday cards.

The event will be catered by Chef Michael McQuay, classically trained chef of Kokopelli Grill. On the menu will be fresh local Salmon barbecued on site with pineapple salsa, roasted red potatoes, ratatouille, and a house salad. Dessert will be chocolate dipped coconut macaroons and cookies from Sweet Beginings. General Seating and the Trestle section will receive one complimentary drink ticket per person. A No-host bar will be on premises for additional beverages.

Where: Railroad Bridge Park
Date: Friday, August 23rd
Time: 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Cost: $95 per person or $570 per table of 6 in General Seating under the lights on the bridge.
$420 per table 4 on the Trestle under the sunny skies of Sequim. We will be offering a limited number (5) of exclusive “Couples Tables” for $300 per table which will include a complimentary bottle of wine or a growler of beer, dessert, flowers and seating on a private area of the bridge. This section will also be the first in line to get their food.

For more information or to register: call – 360-681-4076 or visit https://dungenessrivercenter.org.

River Center Rally

The River Center Rally is a yearly walkathon-modeled event that lasts a few months, from March to late June, and encourages participants and donors to celebrate all the ways we connect with the outdoors while at the same time supporting the mission of the Dungeness River Audubon Center. The teams listed below have been active for about 3 months now, and below is a report on their fundraising success as of late June, a preliminary total of $13,488!
**Rally Teams:**

**Broom Busters** is a team committed to keeping it natural...by pulling Scotch Broom out by their roots. For seven years this team has made it their mission to eradicate scotch broom along the Discovery Trail while supporting the Dungeness River Audubon Center. $1,715.

**150 Miles on Horseback** is just what the name suggests! Annette Nesse loves to connect with the outdoors by riding her horse, because rain or shine she can always enjoy the fresh air, quiet surroundings, wildlife viewing, and bird watching, plus the solitude of getting away from noise and light pollution! Annette is being assisted by her quarterhorse mare, Dodahootchykootchy. $445.

**Swift Swallows** Our goal is to have fun during the River Center Rally by identifying as many species of birds and raising as many dollars as we can between April 1 and June 30. Since first taking flight in 2009, the Swift Swallows team, led by Dave and Julie Jackson, has raised more than $64,000 to support the Center’s educational programs. Visit [http://swiftswallows.weebly.com/](http://swiftswallows.weebly.com/) to see bird lists and totals. $1,205.

**Sand Dollars** Art is a great way to connect and express our admiration for nature. Tuttie Peetz uses her River Center Rally time to work on award winning driftwood sculptures. She asks donors to sponsor her for every hour she spends sanding her masterpieces. What is amazing about Tuttie is that all of her donations are matched! $5,930.

**The Spring Strollers** love walking because it combines healthy exercise with the joy of being outdoors in the spring, observing the trees, flowers, birds, and bugs which make our area so special. Walk on your own, with friends, or join the team leader Lyn Muench. Her goal is to walk 30 miles in 30 days in May, at least. $2,186.

**Dirty Face Racing’s** Powell Jones loves to connect with both nature and himself by riding his single speed mountain bike on singletrack with the silence of only one speed. For this years River Center Rally Powell is participating in a Spokane 24 hour race where he will ride solo for as many dirty miles as he can on his single speed. His goal is to ride over 110 miles. $1,932.

**Pickleball Partners**, led by Annette Hanson, will play the sport for a period of 30 days with a goal to complete 30 hours of play starting April 22nd. The Pickleballers believe that this sport helps keep you both physically and mentally healthy in a fun and rewarding way. $75.
Our wonderful volunteers, fundraising successes, and events as described previously make possible the educational programs and classes which the River Center is able to offer to the community and the region.

Educational Programs for Youth

Summer Camps

Every summer for many years, over a hundred children have enjoyed the River Center’s week long camps, being outdoors and learning about the natural world, and specifically the Dungeness River area and its complex ecology. This summer is no exception.

The pictures are from our first camp, which was held June 24th – 28th, and the next two camps are actually sold out. We still have a few more spots open in the August Summer Nature Camp, August 26th – 30th. What better way to say farewell to summer than spending a whole week outside exploring Railroad Bridge Park? Sign your child up now so they can soak up all of the summer fun before heading back to school! Contact Jenna Ziogas at rceducation@olympus.net

School Programs

The Dungeness River Audubon Center’s educational focus for elementary and middle school children is from second through eighth grades. Thanks to a series of environmental education grants, River Center staff have developed curricula for elementary and middle schools that focus on the wildlife of the Dungeness watershed and how humans affect local watersheds over time. As an example, fifth graders are shown with a watershed monitoring project. Each class participates in a 1-hour classroom visit and a 2-hour field trip to the Dungeness River at Railroad Bridge Park, where they conduct four experiments to collect data that indicate the river’s health and consider the question: “Is the Dungeness River in Railroad Bridge Park healthy for salmon?” The value of this educational opportunity for the children is demonstrated by the excitement and rapt attention in these pictures!
Adult Education Classes

The classes listed below are only a few of the many opportunities offered by the River Center. Check the Events Calendar on the Dungeness River Audubon Center web site for a full list of all activities and classes!

**Flowers of the Olympic Peninsula:** For many years, John Bridge has been leading classes on a search for wild treasures, looking at flowers from low elevation riparian forest, up into the alpine. The April, May, and June classes were well attended, and your last chance for this year is July 9th or 10th at Eagle Point, off the Obstruction Point road! All classes will meet at the Dungeness River Audubon Center at 9am and strive to return by 3pm. Pre-registration is required, and the cost is $25 per class. To sign up or for more information 360-681-4076, or rceducation@olympus.net

The Dungeness River Audubon Center brought back the popular “**Learn by the Light of the Moon**” speaker series this spring. These talks take place once a month, as the full moon dictates. The series provides the opportunity for our community to hear from local naturalists and scientists, working to better understand the world around us. Please join us under the light of the full moon in our beautiful outdoor amphitheater for an evening of discovery and wonder. There is seating in the amphitheater but feel free to bring lawn chairs and blankets! Talks will happen rain or shine (if raining, we’ll move into the building.)

**Where:** Dungeness River Audubon Center (outdoor amphitheater in Railroad Bridge Park)

**July 16th:** “Hunting Behaviors of Cougars”
- Mark Elbroch, PhD, Director & Lead Scientist, Puma Program – Panthera

**August 15th:** “Behind the scenes at the Burke Museum: recent and ongoing bird studies”
- John Klicka, Curator of Birds, Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, Department of Biology, University of Washington

**September 14th:** “Bioluminescence: who needs the light of the moon when you can make your own!” - Neil Harrington, Environmental Biologist, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe

**Time:** All talks will begin at 7pm

**Cost:** Free

For more information, contact:
360-681-4076 / rceducation@olympus.net

**River Center Adult Birding Classes**
- Weekly Wednesday morning Bird Walks throughout the year, meet 10 am at the River Center
- Raptors in Winter
- Corvids in Winter
- Spring for Swallows
- Nest Box Building Class
- Introduction to Birds and Birding
- Birding by ear
**Photography Exhibit at Alderwood Bistro**

A collection of beautiful framed bird photographs by Robert Steelquist is currently on display at Alderwood Bistro, 139 W Alder Street, in Sequim. He is a native Pacific Northwest naturalist, author, photographer and environmental educator, and he lives in the foothills of the Olympic Mountains, near Blyn, Washington. The exhibition—*Square Birds*—features intimate portraits of wild birds framed within a one-to-one aspect ratio that draws the viewer's gaze to the birds' eye and a visual encounter we rarely experience. On Tuesday, July 9th, the Bistro will host an informal reception to feature the prints. There is no dinner service, but light appetizers and limited wine will be available, 6:00-7:30 pm. These photographs are for sale, and **during the month of July, 20% of the purchase price will go to the River Center for the building fund.** So come, enjoy the food, look at the photographs, and possibly come away with a piece of art for your walls!

**River Center Gift Shop**

What’s new in the gift shop? A lot, as it turns out! Roger Magee, our Visitor Services Specialist, is working hard to order items that both reflect the River Center’s theme and also appeal to its many visitors. Some examples: children’s books, from board books to picture books, to science and nature themed fiction for young people, to science experiment guides. There are also many other interesting items for children such as sticker, coloring, and activity books, spinning tops, origami, and puzzles. Do you like to hike? Take a look at *Hiking in the Olympic National Park,* and how about some guides for things you see along the way such as birds, plants, and mushrooms! If you’re not up to long, steep journeys at this point, or just want to take it easy and relax, the *Creaky Knees Guide* might be a good bet. T-shirts and sweatshirts are always a hit - every year there are new designs, and this year new kids’ sizes. My favorite design this year is a picture of a river and trees (appropriate for our venue) with an inscription below the picture: “The River is calling, don’t let it go to Voicemail.” Yes, a shopping experience, but also an attraction for the many visitors to the River Center who stay on and check out our birds, animal pelts, pick up some literature, and return often to see what’s new! **Ann Perkins**

**DRAC Board Member Profile: Laura Dubois**

“When my husband and I moved here, the River Center was our favorite place to connect with people and nature. We started with Wednesday morning bird walks, and then found fun classes, great people, and just a peaceful place to enjoy nature and the river.

The Center offers so many activities for people of all ages. I donate to the Center so we can expand the space and capability to share this treasure with more people.” Laura is also on the Capital Campaign Committee and served as Mayor of Sequim for 2 years, 2008 and 2009. An active and dedicated citizen!