

LWV-Kitsap Bremerton/CK Unit Meeting Notes--Saturday, April 16, 2022

Kitsap United Way Conference Room/Zoom

In Person: Maureen Cervinsky, John Cervinsky, Kathleen Cahall, Linda Museus, Connie Marchant, Debi Barner

Via Zoom: Amy Lawrence, Gail Sackman, Raejean Bridges-Avalos, Robin Muir, Pat Troxell, Janice McLemore, Kathleen Gallagher, Susan Daniel (South Kitsap)

Unit member Amy Lawrence joined us from a location near Salt Creek in Port Angeles area. She shared information about Olympic College's Earth Week activities, her work as a Biology & Environmental Studies professor at OC, and her volunteer activities around conservation and community environmental education.

Amy is a Bremerton native, attended CK High School, graduated from WSU with a degree in Environmental Science. Following some time doing consulting work in Seattle, she earned an MS in Ecology from the Univ. of Virginia, returned to consulting here, then began teaching at OC, part-time at first. She discovered that teaching what she loves and instilling her beliefs to young, interested adults were both very meaningful to her, and she has been teaching full-time ever since. Olympic College is a 2-year public institution, serving 13,000 students/year at three campuses: Bremerton (where Amy teaches), Poulsbo & Shelton.

Sustainability at Olympic College: In the Curriculum

Amy is developing an Integrated Learning Community around Sustainability, partnering with professors in Math, History and Politics disciplines. She works closely with Western Washington University, where OC students can go on to earn a BS or BA in Environmental Science or Environmental Policy, while continuing to study on the Kitsap peninsula. OC's Culinary Program, led by Chef Chris Plemmons, also features a 2-credit Sustainable Food course.

Using Hands-On Learning:

Amy's students go outside every week to collect field data, at OC's Barner Learning Landscape and sometimes at Chico Salmon Park. Age range of her students is about 15 to 65, around 75% of them between 16-20 years old. The 466-acre Rhododendron Preserve off Seabeck Highway, stewarded by the Keta Legacy Foundation, holds some of the last remaining old-growth forest in the Puget Sound lowlands, including the "Big Tree", the largest Douglas fir in our area. Amy said many young people have never taken a walk of that length, 1.5 miles round trip.

Incorporating Service Learning:

Amy offers her students a whole set of opportunities at a variety of locations for required credit or to earn extra credit, designed to help them take ownership of what they're learning, make a positive impact on their community and cultivate a sense of civic duty. Invasive species removal and tree planting are a couple of examples. A handful of students return to help with work parties, even when they don't need the class credit.

Sustainability at Olympic College: On Campus

OC's Sustainability Advisory Council was recently given a larger role in overall college governance. Made up of faculty, administrators & students, the Council looks to reduce OC's carbon footprint, waste & use of chemicals, their goal being to incorporate sustainability in every aspect of the college. They work with

Facilities & Waste Management divisions. In 2019 OC received Tree Campus Higher USA (now Higher Education) recognition by the Arbor Day Foundation.

OC now owns & maintains the Barner Learning Landscape, a 2.5 acre property, perfect for learning about native and invasive plants. Originally owned by the Barner family & the site of their family home built in 1936, the property is now part of the OC campus. Amy says it is an amazing, beautiful resource; very few colleges include access to such an environment.

OC is now installing native plants on campus and tree removal is minimized. When three sequoias needed to be removed because their root systems were compromised, Amy and the Council worked with Facilities & Management people to retain one snag, which provides good habitat for birds and fungi. People are often resistant to that idea, thinking it does not look neat & tidy, but there is no reason not to do it. Sycamore trees on campus needed to come down because their roots were growing too near to sewer lines. Amy said in an urban landscape, there will always be issues of this sort. Balance can come when everyone is more mindful of thinking ahead about root systems so that trees can be safely planted and will not need to be removed later.

A large strip of lawn along Warren Avenue to the east of OC's parking lot is hardpan with poor drainage. It's owned by the city of Bremerton & maintained by OC. It is a front door to OC & Amy wants to include students in designing a new plan: she envisions excavating the soil, replacing it with good soil & creating a diverse landscape of native plants, grasses, low-growing ground covers, rocks with depressions to hold water for bees & birds. They are committed to using no chemicals.

The result of a student-led project, 12 significant trees on campus have been identified, each of which now has an easily visible label with a QR code, giving information not only about the type of tree represented, but about that particular tree. The label also alerts facilities crews and contractors about the importance of those trees and to steer away from them when planning new projects.

A large poster board with the heading "Can It Be Recycled at OC?" is on the wall at the Student Union. It helps to educate the OC community and make everyone aware of the importance of recycling.

Sustainability at Olympic College: Connection With Our Community

Amy partners with many nonprofits, universities and governmental organizations to provide learning and service opportunities for her students, helping to preserve our natural environment. Among them: Keta Legacy Foundation; Great Peninsula Conservancy; Kitsap County Parks; City of Bremerton Parks (Madrona Trails Park); Poulsbo Parks (Fish Park); Kitsap Conservation District; WWU; WSU extension.

She has worked with Keta Legacy Foundation to develop a paid internship forest monitoring program and would like to partner with Kitsap County Parks, especially at Newberry Hill Heritage Park, to help thin out the monoculture of Douglas firs. She works with Mary Earl to have students do monitoring work along the Clear Creek Trail.

At Chico Salmon Park, Amy spearheaded a volunteer stewardship project in 2013, removing invasive plants, replanting with native plants, improving & maintaining trails. The old triple-box culvert was more recently replaced with a new bridge, helping restore the natural flow of the stream and opening up fish

passage for salmon. Students are helping to establish permanent monitoring stations to see how the salmon respond.

Erlands Point Preserve is a 30-acre county park with a pond, trails, and lots of Scotch broom. Students have helped clear a lot of it and have planted Garry oak, the only native oak of Washington state. These sun-loving oaks will help shade out Scotch broom growth. Rather than bag the Scotch broom & send it to the landfill, they chip and spread it.

Once/quarter for extra credit Amy offers a much longer trek to Elwha River. Students have to hike in to the site, where they participate in WWU's Elwha River Watershed Restoration Study. They monitor some of the newly replanted trees, following the removal of the two large dams from 2011-2014.

Amy said many of her students are so jazzed by their experiences in the natural world, doing things outside their comfort zone.

Pat asked if a list of wheelchair-accessible parks in Kitsap County is available. She said that pavement or wood chip paths are both usable for those with wheelchairs. Gravel tends to get into the wheel bearings. She suggested that park trail designers consult with someone who uses a wheelchair. An article in the Kitsap Sun talking about accessibility in parks would bring awareness to the community. Amy said she would check with the volunteer coordinators at Kitsap Parks and get back to us. She and others named some parks that have at least some areas with accessibility: Fish Park in Poulsbo, Clear Creek Trail, Port Orchard Marina Walkway, Theler Wetlands in Belfair, Evergreen Park, Lions Park. Amy also said Josh Farley's 2022 Interactive Story Walks include many accessible to those with disabilities. <https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2022/03/14/kitsap-kingston-poulsbo-bridging-bremerton-port-orchard-silverdale-walks-2022/6999548001/>

Earth Week 2022 Activities, April 18-22 & April 30: <https://www.olympic.edu/about-olympic-college/sustainability-olympic-college/earth-week-activities>

These activities, a mix of remote and in-person events, are all free and open to the public. Clicking on each event gives details about meeting place & time. Amy partners with OC's Health & Activity Board to help plan the activities. She said this week is like her Super Bowl. She gets really excited about all these projects and getting people engaged. Climate change is a huge concern for younger people--a lot of small actions can add up to a greater impact.

The activities include planting Armenian oaks (a heritage tree) on the OC campus, a Madrona Trails Park walk with Amy & Kitsap Sun journalist Josh Farley, Barner Landscape Tour, Zoom talks by experts in their fields, Sustainable Snacks. On April 20 via Zoom Kym Pleger from Kitsap County Public Works will talk about their Storm Drain Call to Artists, a project to do art around storm drains. This year five storm drain sites at OC have been picked and Pleger has agreed to dedicate one of the drains to OC students. Kitsap Bank will provide volunteers from all branches on April 30 for invasive species removal at Erlands Point Preserve and all others are welcome!

Speaking about the recent Climate Roundtable Webinar sponsored by LWV-Kitsap, Robin said her main takeaway was, it's essential to get involved in local and state politics to push for policy changes that will actually make a difference on a grander scale.

A big thank you to Amy for taking time from her family camping trip to speak with us on a Saturday morning! She told us that she really enjoys giving this presentation because it encompasses all the things she loves, and it shows. Her passion for and dedication to her students, our community and the natural world around us are inspiring. We all benefit from her instilling respect for our earth in the young people whose lives she touches.

Know Your County Booklet Project Update:

Some of our unit members, and other members of LWV-K, have been doing research to prepare for our revision of the booklet completed by LWV-Kitsap members in 2005. Raejean is heading up the team, coordinating efforts with Maureen. **The two of them are meeting each Tuesday at 1:30PM at Maureen's house.** All those interested are welcome to join them, either remotely or in-person--contact Raejean or Maureen. Linda Streissguth joined Raejean, Maureen & Carol Larsen via FaceTime on April 11. Connie Marchant joined in-person and Pat Troxell via Zoom on April 18.

Topic: B/CK Unit KYC Booklet Planning Meeting

*Time: **Tuesday**, Apr 26, 2022 01:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)*

Every week on Tue, 3 occurrence(s)

Apr 26, 2022 01:30 PM

May 3, 2022 01:30 PM

May 10, 2022 01:30 PM

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82891014848>

Meeting ID: 828 9101 4848

Passcode: 480086

Dial by your location +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

To review the progress, go to:

[<https://www.lwv-kitsap.org/know-your-county-revision-files/>](https://www.lwv-kitsap.org/know-your-county-revision-files/)

This is a **stand-alone link**, so to get to the KYC work-in-progress, you must use this link.

Maureen screen shared a listing of county agencies/offices; she has reached out to the Auditor, the Assessor, the Treasurer, and the Coroner/Medical Examiner, sending rough drafts regarding each office, explaining what we're doing and inquiring whether the information is still accurate. We are seeking each department's stamp of approval. The county Treasurer's office is on board, having approved our going ahead with their information. As a result of the inquiry, the Assessor's office wrote and revised their website explanation of their department and shared it with us. The Auditor's office and the Treasurer's office sent suggestions for improving our rough drafts.

One thing that will help readers is adding the link to each department's website in our revision. At the moment Kitsap County is in the midst of changing their websites' URL.

Important Points of Discussion:

- Raejean attempted to contact the county's Public Information Officer, letting him/her know about our project and why we are reaching out to county departments. She learned that the county does not have a PIO, so we will ask County Administrator Karen Goon if there is someone who serves in that capacity.
- It's important to acknowledge and honor how diverse our community is--put a general statement to that effect at the beginning of the booklet
- The first completed revisions will come out in digital form: that will not require as much formatting. Then we can narrow down the information for a printed version. We may ask Blue Sky Printing in Poulsbo for their help in formatting
- We want to come up with a cohesive voice in the tone of our finished product
- The team is still hashing out what to include and what not to include--the goal is for people to find it manageable enough to actually read through
- A timeline format for the historical section would be eye-catching and very readable; we could give references for people who want to learn more
- It has been decided that a listing of nonprofit organizations in the county will not be included at this time. There are so many and the information for each can be accessed in other ways.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Special Bremerton/CK Unit Meeting, Zoom Webinar Format

Thursday, April 28th 6:30PM-8PM

Guest: Karen Goon, Kitsap County Administrator

Presentation followed by panel discussion/questions

LWV-K Annual Meeting via Zoom

Tuesday, May 17 5PM

Business Meeting followed by

Guest Speaker WA State Sen. Christine Rolfes

Bremerton/CK Unit Meeting

Saturday, May 21 10AM

@ United Way in downtown Bremerton & via Zoo

Guest: David Nelson, Kitsap Sun editor, re state of local news

Note: Armed Forces Parade also begins at 10AM downtown

Submitted by Candy Rankin