

John and Vicki Clancy:

Nurturing the Communities of Wild Rose Meadow

In the twelve years that the Wild Rose Meadow neighborhood has matured as a warm, hospitable place for humans, another sort of community has taken root along with it: a diverse, green native plant community in the restored wetlands that form a buffer on the Meadows' south and west sides.

Repair or replacement of wetlands, located both on the Wild Rose Meadow acreage and the Stonebridge Wetland off Terrill Beach Road, was part of State approval for Wild Rose Meadow's creation. This required an initial planting by Robin Kucklick and Joe Bullock, and years of professional supervision by Scott Rozenbaum from Lopez.

John and Vicki Clancy have been steadfast stewards of the land and adopted the wetlands as their ecological ward. Walking the wetlands through a gentle network



John and Vicki Clancy in front of the wetlands at Wild Rose Meadow.

Key to ensuring the growth and health of the wetlands in Wild Rose Meadow has been the years of dedicated work by neighborhood volunteers John and Vicki Clancy.

of paths they have created and maintain along with their son, Willie, John and Vicki can tell you about the history of individual plants. Like how this cedar tree has shot up 12 feet overhead in a "sweet spot" of soft ground while its nearby siblings are growing more slowly, punching their way through more compact soils on parts of the former home- construction staging site the Clancys have now helped reclaim.

The Clancys have been busy over the years. Planting, transplanting, strategic pruning, watering by hand with buckets from the pond when needed, fencing to give the new plant community safety from hungry deer. All of these activities have resulted in a diverse enclave of native plants and even produced a landing spot for ducks – a flock of five, so far.

For the human community, the neighborhood wetlands have also become a visual and sound buffer between their homes and the traffic on Mt. Baker Road.

The State has now declared the wetlands sufficiently established and not in need of further supervision. Yet John, Vicki, and Willie intend to continue their

Continued on Page 2

The Pea Patch Property: Growing a Better Safety Net for Our Neighbors

What better use of old island acreage than to provide food, shelter and support for folks who are living here?

It's a rare opportunity with great potential for good:

- Eleven acres for sale in Eastsound.
- More low- and very-low-income rentals close to jobs and services.
- A permanent, expanded home for the Orcas Food Bank.
- Convenient access to support services from the Orcas Community Resource Center.
- A Day Use Center for islanders who are living in unstable or substandard situations – with showers, laundry, mailboxes, internet and skilled staff.

OPAL is collaborating with the Orcas Island Community Foundation, the Food Bank, the Community Resource Center and the Coalition on Homelessness on Orcas to convert the last portion of the Lavender Family Farm into a community resource that answers the needs of low-income islanders.

“There are fewer and fewer places for year-round residents who are at the low end of the income scale to live,” explained Lisa Byers, OPAL Executive Director. “This is a coordinated community response that addresses the needs of folks who are at risk of homelessness,

or who are already living without adequate shelter, or who are struggling economically.”

OPAL's role will be to build and manage 15 to 30 apartments for those who are without shelter or inadequately housed. Beyond an affordable place to live, residents will have access to a range of supportive services.

There will be cost efficiencies in building everything at once, with construction funding coming from county, state and federal programs as well as private foundations and individuals.

Funds to buy the property must be committed by May 1.

To learn more about the scope and timeline for the project, contact Lisa Byers at 360-376-3191.

“**This is needed, it's collaborative and it will improve life on Orcas for everyone.**”

– Executive Director
Lisa Byers



The Pea Patch Lane property is located right in Eastsound Village, between the fire station and Enchanted Forest Road. (See graphic on the opposite page.)

Nurturing Communities Of Wild Rose Meadow

(Continued from Page 1)

stewardship for the years to come as this plant community continues to mature. Soon some fences will be coming down for plants that have made strong enough claims to withstand the deer. John is grateful for the opportunity to become intimate with the wetlands, and is happy to continue helping “nature use her intelligence” to prevail.

The 'Hidden Homelessness'

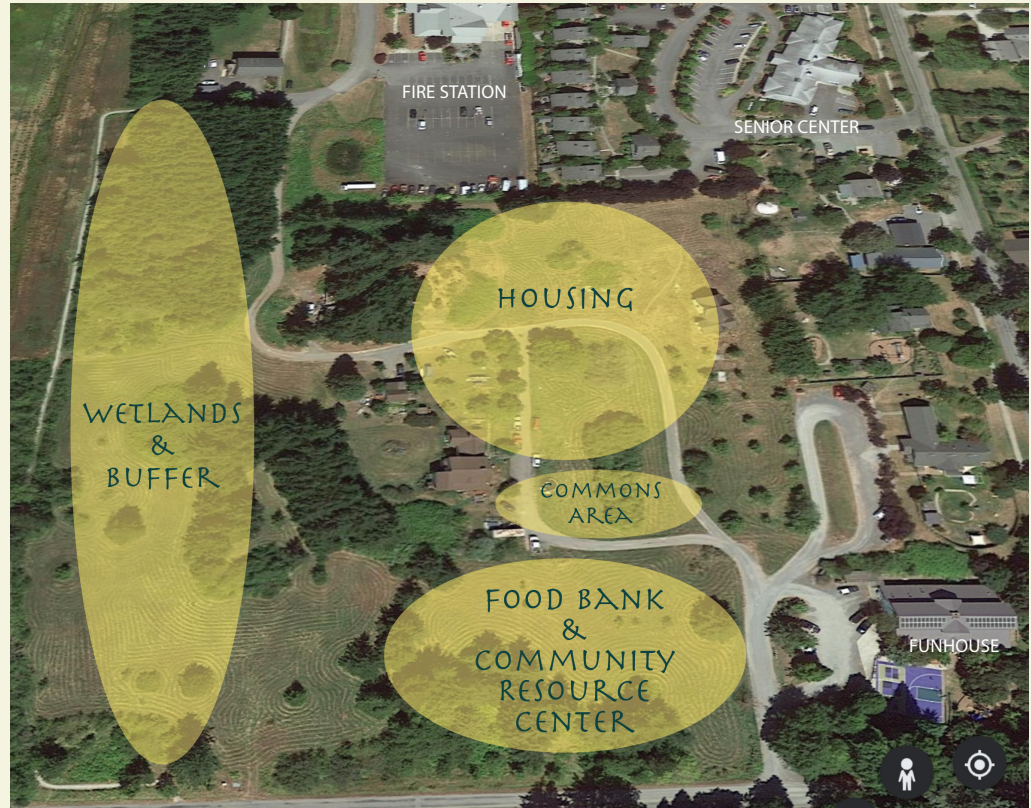
Homelessness on Orcas looks different than in urban areas.

Many rural homeless individuals live in places we do not see. They may be in the woods on private property, in cars, sheds, tents and other places not intended for permanent habitation. Many live in substandard housing or RVs without adequate heat, water or septic. On Orcas, like other rural locations, the greatest concern is poor quality of housing.

In addition, housing pressures and the seasonal nature of work leads many into a cycle of homelessness, often disproportionately affecting children and families. Many of the individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness work, but at very low-wage jobs.

Prevention is the most cost-effective way to address homelessness.

In addition to increasing the supply of available homes, this means providing support services, rental or utility subsidies and



A preliminary site plan for how the property could be utilized by each organization.

connection to healthcare for those at risk of becoming one of the "Hidden Homeless" on Orcas.

For those living in these substandard situations, the planned Day Center at the Community Resource Center on the Pea Patch Property will help provide access to hygiene, cooking facilities, water and, most importantly, knowledgeable staff to assist with resources.

A recent Point-In-Time count on Orcas, conducted in January, revealed the following:

Number of People Experiencing Homelessness	19
Number of People At-Risk of Becoming Homeless	28
Number of People Lacking Basic Amenities	29
Without Drinking Water	5
Without a Restroom	6
Without Heat	4
Without Cooking Facilities	3
Without Bathing Facilities	6



Physical Location: 286 Enchanted Forest Road
P.O. Box 1133
Eastsound, WA 98245
opalclt@opalclt.org • www.opalclt.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

IN THIS ISSUE

Writing/Editing: Vicki Brems, Margaret Mills,
Heather Stansbury, Alysha Sherburne, Lisa Byers
Photographers: Vicki Brems, Alysha Sherburne,
Heather Stansbury, Jon Chappelle
Layout and Design: Mary Ann Sircely

“I feel really really fortunate, and lucky, and grateful to have an OPAL home so that I can make happy, healthy choices for our family.” – Sara Lucia

Housing Security Creates Happier, Healthier Families

Sara Lucia is grateful to be an OPAL homeowner. She attributes the affordability of her home as an important part of why she and her husband have been able to make some needed changes in their lives. Most recently, it has given them the opportunity to “change jobs, spend more time as a family, [and] show our kids that it’s okay to make changes in your life that you need to make.”

You’ve likely met Sara and her husband Jon Chappelle, and if not, you’ve probably had one of their sandwiches. The pair created a number of mouthwatering combinations at their former Eastsound restaurant, Voyager.

Many islanders were sad when the couple decided to close their doors last fall, but for Jon and Sara, selling their restaurant was the right decision. “Our business was really successful – Jon and I have always worked together well – but it was too taxing on us as a family.” Being small business owners was particularly challenging with two active young children. Shuffling between closing shop for the day



OPAL Homeowners Jon Chappelle, Sara Lucia and their children.

and getting their son and daughter to after-school activities was tiresome. They finally decided that rather than support a growing business, they wanted the time and energy to support their growing children.

The couple have since taken on new interests and professions. Jon works with Rainshadow Solar. Sara is taking classes to become an elementary school teacher, while subbing at the public school.

Visit us online at www.opalclt.org