Sometimes when the world seems to be falling apart I become disheartened and frustrated. But do you know what makes me feel better? I look around at my surroundings and feel encouraged again. We live in a wonderful community that cares about what makes us whole and satisfied. The people of Bainbridge Island have determined their own destiny for many years by working to have great schools, social services, and a fantastic environment.

So many of you have helped the Bainbridge Island Land Trust continue to provide the community with open spaces, parks, habitat preservation and stewardship of the land. From Wednesday Work Parties to serving on committees that help BILT carry out its mission, to financial help for maintaining our organization and extra support in property acquisition, you are with us. You help make sure that we continue to determine what shapes our community and the place we live.

Reading the news can leave us feeling frustrated and a loss of control. But there is something that we can do. We can all continue to strive to make Bainbridge Island the best place to live for us, our children and grandchildren, and the other creatures that inhabit this island. Although we are just a small part of the world, we can lead by example in making our community even better. There is nothing quite like being able to walk out your door or take a short drive to reach the many trails for walks that calm the mind and replenish the soul.

As I leave the board I want to thank each and every one of you one last time for all your support and for everything you have done to help BILT become a better organization and for helping us continue to preserve the best of Bainbridge Island. It has been my greatest privilege to work with and for you.

With gratitude,
Connie Waddington

What a great year to be a volunteer at the Bainbridge Island Land Trust!

In 2017, more than 280 volunteers gave over 2,750 volunteer hours supporting the Land Trust’s mission— to preserve and steward the diverse natural environment of Bainbridge Island. For everyone. Forever.

We simply could not have accomplished what we did in 2017 without the help of our dedicated volunteers. Volunteers gave their time generously in many different ways; through office support, bulk mailings, event help, conservation easement and owned land monitoring, work parties and land restoration projects, photography, board and committee work, legal advice, land surveys, and much, much more.

We appreciate each and every one of our talented volunteers and want to say THANK YOU to all of those who donated time in 2017. Interested in volunteering with the Land Trust? E-mail sinclair@bi-landtrust.org or call the Land Trust office at 206-842-1216.
In July, 2017, the Land Trust purchased the 14.17-acre Jablonko parcel. This property is part of the Peters Tree Farm and adjacent to the Gazzam Lake Nature Preserve which was originally established in 1995. More than 100 people have joined us to tour this woodland property. As with all our preserved lands, we will have a management and stewardship plan for this stunning new parcel, which will be managed as a forest preserve, while providing public access on existing trails.

The Jablonko purchase is just the beginning of the largest acquisition campaign in our 29 year history. The goal of the campaign is as ambitious as it is necessary. Over the last year, we have worked rigorously to plan for an effective campaign - Stand for the Land, a multi-property, multi-year acquisition campaign that will culminate in the 30th anniversary year of the Land Trust. Over the next two years, we will acquire five or more properties and raise up to $5 million. Each of these properties is a special place, and each one tells part of our Island’s history. Now, we all must consider how we will shape the future of our natural areas in the face of rapid regional change.

Our Conservation Plan, which quantifies our rapidly disappearing natural lands, underscores the urgency of an acquisition campaign that is unprecedented in scale and pace. This campaign will allow the Bainbridge Island Land Trust to meet this challenge. Through the Stand for the Land campaign, we will put science into practice on the ground before these treasured natural areas slip away. The Land Trust’s Conservation Plan identifies protection priorities which include Island wildlife networks (expanding connections among currently protected lands) and shorelines. Each of these new acquisitions will contribute to the realization of these priorities that assures lasting results.

The Stand for the Land campaign will provide all of us a hopeful vision and a plan of action to protect Bainbridge Island’s natural places for everyone, forever.
Glenn and Nancy Haber received this year’s Phyllis Young Award in recognition of actions that exemplify the mission of the Land Trust to preserve and steward the diverse natural environment of Bainbridge Island. Glenn is the current President of the Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation, a non-profit committed to improving the Island’s parks and recreational facilities and to expanding recreational opportunities on Bainbridge Island. The work of the Parks Foundation can be seen at local playgrounds like Owen’s and Schel Chelb, enhanced trails criss-crossing the island, and current restoration projects including Hidden Cove Dock and Blakely Harbor, to name just a few.

Just this past fall, the Haber’s Fletcher Bay Foundation which is dedicated to charitable grant making on Bainbridge Island, created the Moritani Preserve, an 8.5 acre mixture of fields and woodland in the heart of Winslow. After purchase of the property and subsequent clean-up, and restoration, the Habers donated the land to the Park District as passive public park and natural open space.

“Glenn and Nancy have been fixtures in the preservation and stewardship of Bainbridge Island’s natural places for decades,” said Jane Stone, Executive Director of the Bainbridge Island Land Trust. “Their generosity of spirit cannot be measured, but will forever be appreciated and looked to as a model of positive local impact and inclusion for all in the great outdoors.”