

Whatcom Parks and Recreation Foundation

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Whatcom Parks & Recreation Foundation Honors Stephen Frank and Paul Woodcock

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The Whatcom Parks and Recreation Foundation recently honored Stephen Frank and Paul Woodcock by presenting them both with the William J. Dittrich award. The awards were given at the Foundation's annual holiday party December 13, 2010 at the Roeder Home. WPRF President Daniel Tepper presented the awards to the community leaders, with many of their colleagues and friends in attendance.

Paul Woodcock grew up in the woods of Wisconsin, where he developed an early appreciation for the natural world. After leaving Wisconsin for the Washington Peninsula, he was eventually drawn to Huxley College, where he studied conservation, biology, anthropology, journalism, and eventually earned a degree in Environmental Education in 1975. Paul has been taking people on birding tours, formally and informally, since childhood. He became President of the Audubon Society in the late 1970s, and was instrumental in the development of the Tennant Lake Interpretive Center. He worked as a bus driver with the Bellingham School District for 8 years and with WTA for 12 years, always making time to volunteer, and frequently pointing out bird species to his riders. He is the past President of the Friends of Tennant Lake and Hovander Park, and current Vice President of the North Cascades Audubon Society. His work and passion for parks and recreation has been an inspiration for all who have known and worked with him.

Everybody's favorite handyman, Stephen Frank is a man who "knows how to use a shovel." He has been an asset to Whatcom County since his arrival in the early 1970s. During his time at then Western Washington State College's Leisure Studies program, he served as an intern at the Whatcom County Parks Department under Director Roger DeSpain. He has supported the effort to sustain educational programs at Tennant Lake, along with Paul Woodcock, since the interpretive center's inception. Over the past 30 years, Frank has volunteered teaching sailing and canoeing, worked on Greenways projects, planted trees for NSEA, volunteered for the Fragrance Garden, and even volunteered at the Parks-run Senior Center.

"You set what you think is a good example," says Frank, "and hope people notice."

William J. Dittrich believed wholeheartedly that an active lay citizen organization is needed to support parks and recreation on the local, state, and national levels. The challenge is for each of us to continue in the spirit of his leadership. Award recipients are publically recognized by having their names engraved on leaf-shaped plaques in Big Rock Garden. The Big Rock Garden is one of the many local parks supported by the WPRF through transfer grants and public donations.

The Whatcom Parks and Recreation Foundation is a public, non-profit corporation that supports parks and recreation and open spaces for Whatcom County citizens. We receive and administer donations for park projects and recreational programs throughout Whatcom County and its communities. To learn more about us please contact us at (360) 389-3803, info@wprfoundation.org, or write to WPRF, P.O. Box 29963, Bellingham WA 98228 or visit us on Facebook.