

# LANDMARKS 2017

Newsletter for Kachemak Heritage Land Trust

## HIGHLIGHTS

KHLT Welcomes New Faces

Grass that Harms Salmon

Control of  
Orange Hawkweed

Anchor River  
Conservation Area

Baby Salmon Live Here -  
Seward Edition

Land at Heart





- Sam Means, *President*
- Donna Aderhold, *Vice President*
- Larsen Klingel, *Treasurer*
- Hannah Heimbuch, *Secretary*
- Joey Allred
- Marian Beck
- Christi Griffard
- Kevin Mertzweiler
- John Mouw

## KHLT Staff

- Marie McCarty, *Executive Director*
- Trish Boyer, *Accounting and Grants Manager*
- Joel Cooper, *Stewardship Director*
- Courtney Dodge, *Stewardship Coordinator*
- Denise Jantz, *Communications & Development Coordinator*
- Lauren Rusin, *Conservation Projects Manager*

## KHLT Contact Information

Kachemak Heritage Land Trust  
 315 Klondike Avenue  
 Homer, AK 99603  
 (907) 235-5263  
[www.facebook.com/kachemakheritagelandtrust](http://www.facebook.com/kachemakheritagelandtrust)  
[www.KachemakLandTrust.org](http://www.KachemakLandTrust.org)

## Credits

Photos © KHLT (unless noted)  
 Layout Design © Debi Bodett  
 Cover Photo © KHLT  
 Longtime KHLT supporter Nina Faust leads a hike on KHLT protected land in Homer.

## CONTENTS

- DIRECTOR'S COLUMN ..... 1
- NEW FACES ..... 2
- GRASS THAT HARMS SALMON ..... 4
- CONTROL OF ORANGE HAWKWEED ..... 5
- NEW ANCHOR RIVER PROPERTY.... 7
- BABY SALMON LIVE HERE - SEWARD EDITION ..... 9
- LAND AT HEART ..... 10
- NOTES FROM THE FIELD..... 11
- RARE ORCHID ..... 12



Marie McCarty  
Executive Director

Alaska maintains a delicate balance of people existing in close proximity to wildlife. Moose calve in our yards and on the trails we walk. They wander across our roads. Hawks and other birds nest in our forests, and bears hibernate in the winter but in the summer, they roam our woods. We likely agree that it is in part because of unexpected encounters with wildlife that we love this place.

In the dead of winter a few years back, a lynx sauntered by our in-town office cabin, across our driveway and uphill toward Pioneer Avenue. Our staff shifted from window to window to take photos and watch. Of course, we promptly posted the sleek lynx on Facebook which received many likes, as it was shared multiple times. It is a pleasure to share encounters like this because it is such a rarity for much of the world.

It is an honor to work for an organization dedicated to preserving the important fish and wildlife habitat that is a defining characteristic of the Kenai Peninsula. KHLT's work is a gift that we choose to leave for those who follow us. I hope that you will continue to support our conservation work and help us leave a proud legacy for future generations.

Marie McCarty  
Executive Director



## FAREWELL To Rick Cline

The Board of Directors thanks Rick Cline for his amazing work as KHLT's Accounts and Grants Manager since late 2012. In addition to being a great numbers guy, Rick streamlined accounting and grants management workflow and kept the KHLT office, Budget and Investment Committee meetings, and board meetings lively with his creative wordplay. Who knew an accountant could be funny, too? Rick's tenure included a period of expansion for KHLT, including bringing part-time staff to full-time and adding a full-time stewardship coordinator as the number of conservation properties under KHLT management grew, and adding the annex to increase office space. With Rick's attention to financial detail and revision to

KHLT standard processes and procedures related to finances and grants, we are well-positioned to move into re-accreditation in 2018. ✨



# KHLT Welcomes New Staff and Committee Members

## Lauren Rusin

**L**auren Rusin, our new Conservation Projects Manager, moved from Michigan's Upper Peninsula in January to continue her environmental career. Prior to her Alaskan adventure, Lauren earned an A.S. in Landscape Horticulture and worked in the landscape design field and at a greenhouse and nursery in Michigan. She went on to receive a B.S. in Forestry from Michigan Technological University. While earning her degree, Lauren worked for the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources and an Industrial Timber Company. Upon graduation, she began her career as a consulting forester in Wisconsin and was fortunate to work on projects including real estate, surveying, right-of-way, timber and carbon credit evaluation, and invasive species control in states including Kentucky, New Mexico, Minnesota, Michigan, and Alaska.



Conservation  
Projects Manager

Alaska captivated Lauren and she simply had to return! As a new permanent Homer resident, Lauren enjoys skiing, biking, hiking, fishing, camping, and making friends!

## Trish Boyer

**T**rish Boyer joined KHLT in July as the Accounting and Grants Manager, after moving here with her from Palmer with her family. For Trish, this is a return trip to the area having lived here from 1995 - 1998. Trish graduated from Kachemak Bay Campus/UAA with an Associates of Accounting Degree in 1996. In her free time, she likes to berry pick, make jams and jellies, read, and spend time with her family at their cabin at Sheep Mountain.



Accounting and Grants  
Manager

## Courtney Dodge

**C**ourtney Dodge came to KHLT from Michigan as the 2016/2017 Stewardship Intern and in May of 2017, became our Stewardship Coordinator. Courtney was the first in her family to graduate from college, graduating from Western Michigan University with a degree in Environmental Studies. After getting her degree, she went on to be an Americorps volunteer based in Asheville, North Carolina, doing trail work with the National Park Service in places like the beautiful Smoky Mountains. "I've been doing volunteer stewardship with many different nature centers and conservation organizations for years now. I've never been this far west or north before. I'm incredibly grateful to be in Homer!" In her free time, Courtney likes to walk on the beach with her dog, hike, and explore Homer and all that it has to offer.



Stewardship Coordinator

## Thank You!

**A** big shout out to Betsy Webb and Nina Cunningham from the Development Committee and Erik Niebuhr from Budget and Investment, who have moved on from their committee positions.

We also thank Board Member Christi Griffard who will be leaving us to start a new chapter of her life in Fairbanks! We greatly value the time you invested with us – you're very appreciated. Thank you!

## Read Dunn

**KHLT** Welcomes Read Dunn to our Budget and Investment Committee. Read retired and moved to Homer to enjoy the company of his daughter, Jane, and her family.

Read was raised on the East Coast and gradually moved West. He earned a Master's Degree in Economics at Penn State University, and then became a CPA in Michigan. For almost fifty years he was employed as a banker, first in Michigan and then, for the last ten years of his career, in Wasilla. Much of his banking career revolved around real estate lending and management. Outside of his employment, Read served on two different planning commissions and a tax equalization board.

Read has a long-held interest in amateur wrestling and some occasional fishing. Telling wrestling or fishing stories is a special pleasure. KHLT is a continuation of a life time interest in the natural world and the environment and is an ideal blend of free enterprise and conservation.



Budget and Investment Committee

## Katie Jo Gamble

**K**atie Jo Gamble was raised in Anchor Point and attended Homer High School. After living and working in Anchorage, working as a receptionist at a mortgage company and part time as the On-Ice Hostess for the Alaska Aces hockey team, Katie Jo moved to Florida and Texas for a few years before finding her way back to Homer in 2011. She has been working in the Title industry for 6 years and is currently the Senior Escrow officer running First American Title in Homer. Katie Jo spends her free time teaching Zumba classes and volunteering for her kids' activities including the Nutcracker and Kachemak Swim Club. She was interested in volunteering for the land trust because I really enjoy the history that comes with real property. I value what the Land Trust does by helping individuals preserve the stories and history of the land. I feel like my unique background in the title industry allows me to provide helpful knowledge on the Land and Easement Committee.



Land and Easement Committee

## Karen Wuestenfeld

**K**aren Wuestenfeld was drawn to be a KHLT volunteer after retiring from over 30 years as an environmental professional, wanting to continue to provide her expertise and enthusiasm for conserving resource values in the land trust area. She has worked in the public sector, in environmental consulting, and for BP, both locally and in the corporate office. Karen has an M.S. from the University of Michigan in Water Resources Management, and a B.S. from Michigan State University in Resource Management. She also serves on the Board of Directors for Alaska Public Media. Karen has lived in Anchorage since 1981, and has been a part time Homer resident since 1995. She will make Homer her permanent residence in 2018. Karen enjoys gardening, fishing, cooking, reading, and is learning to paint.



Land and Easement Committee

## Colonel Bernard F. Griffard U.S. Army Retired

**A**fter 22 years as an Associate Professor at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Bernie and Honey Griffard moved to Homer in December 2015 to join their daughter, Christi, and new grandson, Patrick, as Alaska residents. Prior to joining the U.S. Army War College faculty, Bernie spent 28 years as a career Army Infantry officer serving in the Republic of Vietnam, Korea, Germany, Berlin, Belgium, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and various posts in the United States.



Land and Easement Committee

Bernie holds a Bachelor's degree from Loyola University Chicago, and a Master's degree from the University of Miami, Florida. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College.

"Living in Homer provides the opportunity to enjoy all types and levels of outdoor activities no matter what the season. Preserving the opportunities to enjoy what Alaska has to offer was a major motivator for my volunteering to work with the land trust," Bernie said. ✧



Kenai Watershed Forum volunteers removing reed canary grass from a salmon stream. Photo courtesy of Kenai Watershed Forum

## We Strategize a Defense for Grass that Harms Salmon

By Jennifer Peura, Invasive Specialist, Kenai Watershed Forum

**F**ireweed turns a deep magenta and golden-yellow aspen leaves quake in the slightest breeze. Fall in Alaska is precious and fleeting. Our native plants decay quickly, marking the end of the growing season as daylight dwindles.

The invasive reed canary grass takes advantage of fall. While native bluejoint reed grass dies back to a tawny brown, reed canary grass remains vivid green. Reed canary grass encroaches on native plants that are dying back for the season through its root system. It shoots ruby-colored rhizomes into new territory, forming thick mats impenetrable to other species the following spring.

Reed canary grass also affects salmon at every stage of life by growing on stream banks and into streambeds. Stream channels constrict and flow rates increase, which forces salmon to exert more energy. Deforested stream banks result in increased stream temperatures, which affect salmon fry and adults. Flow rates outside of the constricted channel slow and sedimentation increases, which affects salmon roe.

Over the past decade, the Kenai Watershed Forum has conducted field trials of non-herbicide techniques to manage reed canary grass. The trials included tarping (high cost with no success at eradication or containment) and manually digging (high cost with some success of containment). In contrast, the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and the Chugach National Forest have had success with strategic, point-specific use of herbicides. When dealing with chemicals, the agencies use extreme caution and judgement, evaluating each site for the negative effects of reed canary grass and herbicides on salmon habitat.

As you hike and fish in fall, keep an eye out for bright green reed canary grass. Take action by calling the Kenai Watershed Forum for tips and strategies to keep our watersheds clean. It's important to attack any new infestations as early as possible. Early detection is our best tool.

For information at what to do if you find reed canary grass, call Jennifer Peura at Kenai Watershed Forum, (907) 260-5449 or email [jennifer@kenaiwatershed.org](mailto:jennifer@kenaiwatershed.org). ✧



# Control of Orange Hawkweed

by Gino Graziano,  
UAF Cooperative Extension Service

Stewardship Coordinator, Courtney Dodge covers a patch of orange hawkweed on KHLT's Poopdeck property

## BACKGROUND

Orange hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*) spreads rapidly, reproducing by seed as well as spreading with rhizomes and stolons. Once established, orange hawkweed is able to displace grass and forb species. Orange hawkweed is most often found in meadows, roadsides, forest edges, lawns and pastures. This invasive plant is a problem in natural areas, lawns, and agricultural land because it will completely displace most other plants.

## IMPACTS

- Spreads easily from place to place, invading natural areas in addition to disturbed sites
- Forms monocultures as it displaces beneficial plants
- Can significantly reduce forage production in hay fields and pastures
- Can take over lawns and flower gardens

# Timing Hawkweed Control

## Early-Summer Stage



### Pull/Mow/Dig

Do not do this unless you are dealing with one or two plants.

## Bud-Flower Stage



### Pull/Mow/Dig

Do not do this unless you are dealing with one or two plants. Collecting flower heads can prevent seed dispersal in new areas.

## Flower-Seed Stage



### Pull/Mow/Dig

Do not do it! You are more likely to spread than control it.

### Cover

Apply weed barrier with one or two plants.

### Cover

Apply weed barrier to infested area. Apply herbicide to plants or expand weed barrier if growing beyond the barrier edge.

### Cover

Continue monitoring and pulling edges.

### Herbicides

Effective now. Treat infested area as described above.

### Herbicides

Aminopyralid is modestly effective; however, little kill may occur until the following season.

### Herbicides

No longer effective; consider covering.

To read the full brochure by Gino, and for more information on invasive plants, visit [www.uaf.edu/ces/pests](http://www.uaf.edu/ces/pests)

## IDENTIFICATION

- Reddish-orange flowers form at the end of a nearly leafless flower stalk
- Leaves are basal rosettes
- Hairs cover the plant
- There are no native look-alike species

## CONTROL

It is best to begin control efforts for orange hawkweed as soon as it is found; do not delay. Orange hawkweed is challenging to control. If new infestations are allowed to become established, it can take years of effort to control them.

Orange hawkweed produces 50-600 seeds per plant that remain viable for about seven years. Mowing, weed whacking, pulling and digging do not work on orange hawkweed infestations. Any root or stolon fragments broken from pulling and digging will resprout, and the disturbance associated with manual control will stimulate additional growth. Infestations may be covered with a weed barrier fabric if the edges are monitored and any hawkweed seen growing along the edges is controlled. Systemic herbicides are the most effective control measure because they kill the roots.



In late 2016, KHLT purchased an amazing new property on the Anchor River, adding 27.03-acres to our important Anchor River Salmon Conservation Area. This area on the lower Anchor River is preserved for its important juvenile salmon habitat and wildlife corridors.





Seward resident and land trust supporter Mark Luttrell shows off a Baby Salmon Lives Here sign next to an unsuspecting place that salmon are found in downtown Seward.

## Baby Salmon Live Here - Seward Edition

**KHLT's** Baby Salmon Live Here initiative is going to Seward! The goal of this important program is to help encourage good stewardship of important salmon habitat. This includes installing Baby Salmon Live Here signs in strategic, unsuspecting places that salmon live and need to survive.

Seward resident and past KHLT board member Mark Luttrell has been assisting KHLT staff member, Denise Jantz in our efforts. Mark took Denise on an eye-opening tour of the landscape, strategically visiting important habitat areas that may be

priority sign locations. The Baby Salmon Live Here project is currently being implemented in other areas including Anchor Point and Kenai/Soldotna by KHLT and in Anchorage/Matsu by Great Land Trust, who developed the program in 2014. We hope the initiative will be state-wide in the not too distant future.

KHLT thanks Mark and all those in the Seward community who are helping us implement this salmon-centric program on the Peninsula. ✧



Kathy Heindl, King Maker from Kenai

## Kenai King Maker

This summer we were honored to crown Kathy Heindl of Kenai a King Maker! Kathy's love for Kenai Peninsula rivers is evident by the countless hours she dedicates as a volunteer for Kenai Watershed Forum's Stream Watch program. By monitoring Centennial Park, Moose Range Meadows, Kasilof River, and Bing's Landing, it's her selfless actions that help protect the vital habitat needed for salmon to live and thrive. As King Maker, Kathy was also recognized as Alaskan of the Week in Washington D.C. by Senator Dan Sullivan.

The King Maker Program recognizes individual Alaskans, from landowners to schoolchildren, making a difference for salmon. The goal of King Maker is to share with people the value of protecting habitat critical to salmon, helping to ensure long-lasting conservation. Kathy's dedication makes a difference for salmon on the Peninsula – thank you Kathy! ✧

**Do you know a potential King Maker?**



Do you know a potential King Maker?  
Let us know! We want to hear from you.

Email Denise at [denise@kachemaklandtrust.org](mailto:denise@kachemaklandtrust.org)



Carmen and Conrad with their daughter Eryn on the Grewignk Glacier Trail  
Photo courtesy of Conrad Field

## Land at Heart

KHLT's Board of Directors was honored to present Carmen and Conrad Field with our 4th annual Land at Heart Award at our Annual Gala in October. This award recognizes members of our community, "for distinguished contributions to land conservation on the Kenai Peninsula."

Although Carmen is not physically here with us today, her memory and spirit are strong. We thank Carmen and Conrad for their wonderful contributions to our community, touching so many.

Carmen and Conrad's lifetime work has inspired thousands of people, young and old, to love, appreciate, explore, and play in the natural world that surrounds us. Carmen, as an ardent environmental educator, and Conrad, as a quintessential ecologist and naturalist, have shared an infectious enthusiasm and joy for the outdoors.

Carmen and Conrad's passionate love of the natural world is and will continue to be incredibly inspiring far into the future. By sharing their passion and knowledge with so many, they have planted the necessary conservation seed with younger generations, nurturing the future stewards of the Peninsula's treasured lands.

They are shining examples of what makes the Kenai Peninsula and our community the special place that it is and will be far into the future. ✧



Northern Goshawk photo courtesy of Brian M. Collins



Northern Goshawk nest on Calvin and Coyle Trail

## Notes from the Field

By Courtney Dodge, Stewardship Coordinator

As Stewardship Coordinator, it's my job to not only hike around and monitor the various properties we protect, but also to manage any issues that come up along the way. Issues can include a variety of things, like trash, trespass, log cutting, permitted activities, illegal activities, and wildlife. Wildlife issues are the least encountered but always the most memorable. Remember when our Calvin and Coyle trail had to be closed a few years ago because that black bear was protecting its moose calf kill? That's the kind of thing I'm talking about when I say, "wildlife issues." The Calvin and Coyle trail is a well-traveled beloved trail within Homer city limits that is a corridor to the Beluga wetlands. It's home to many species; small mammals, shore birds, moose, the occasional bear, and predatory birds like eagles and hawks. It's become a community staple because of its easy tread and boardwalk, short distance, and relatively natural ecological state among the ever-expanding Homer urban space.

This past summer, community members who frequent the trail, informed us that there was a northern goshawk aggressively protecting its nest, built next to the trail, by swooping (and narrowly missing) anyone passing by. Goshawks are among the most aggressive birds on the planet. They might not be as big as eagles or condors but they make up for it in sheer boldness and hostility. Thanks to our wonderful trail frequenters it did not take long for KHLT to learn about the hawk and its um... enthusiasm for protecting its nest. We sprang into action as soon as we found out. We put up "Trail Temporarily Closed" signs and called the appropriate local entities such as the fire and police department, the neighboring Paul Banks Elementary school, Chamber of Commerce, local newspapers, and of course KBB1 radio station to inform the public.

Fortunately for the goshawk, we closed the trailhead where it had nested and offered an alternate trail entrance at the Paul Banks side. Of course, it was disappointing to close the trail for a good portion of the summer, but the silver lining is that people could continue to use Calvin and Coyle's loop and viewing platform while entering from the Paul Banks side, possibly a part of the trail that they didn't know about before! By avoiding the main trailhead, visitors helped protect the nest of baby goshawks and saved the parent hawk a lot of stress. That is ultimately what KHLT strives to do, protect land for wildlife habitat. The goshawk situation embodies what we as stewardship staff do and, most importantly, why we do it. Okay, yeah, it was a bummer that the first section of the trail had to be closed due to aggressive wildlife. But, that is exactly why the 28-acre property is protected; to ensure animals always have a place to call home in Homer.

As stewardship staff, some days turn out to be completely different than what was planned. With situations like the summer 2017 Calvin and Coyle goshawk, I must say a big thank you to all the community members who helped out. It certainly made our jobs much easier and saved someone from possibly getting injured by a disgruntled bird. Thank you to the people who initially told us about the hawk, thank you to everyone who took the trail closure seriously and respected the hawk itself. The respect and cohesiveness shown by the trail users is reassuring to those of us who make it our job to protect land and wildlife while still maintaining the human element. I encourage people to experience the Calvin and Coyle trail for themselves. Look up to the right when you get to the first wooden bridge, you may notice the abandoned goshawk nest, empty until next season. Maybe. You never know. #stewardship ✧



## Pick.Click.Give

Pick.Click.Give is a fantastic way for Alaskans to support their favorite non-profit organizations by donating part of their permanent fund dividend. Please consider KHLT when applying for your 2018 PFD! ✧



Erik Clarke of Alaska State Parks and KHLT Stewardship Director, Joel Cooper

## Poopdeck Trail Planning

This summer, Erik Clarke with Alaska State Parks helped KHLT map the possible trail route on our Poopdeck Platt property in the heart of downtown Homer. Stay tuned for updates in 2018! ✧



Rare orchid known as Bog Adder's Mouth

## Rare Orchid Found On KHLT Preserved Anchor Point Property

For the second year in a row, members of the Alaska Native Plant Society hiked one of our preserved properties in Anchor Point. This year, one of the organization's founding members, Marilyn Barker, led the trip. Participants included one person from Utah, two from Anchorage, and five women from the Homer area.

Marilyn told KHLT staff that they were able to add approximately 20 new species to the property's native plant list. "One exciting plant found was *Bog Adder's Mouth*. It is a small orchid that until just a few years ago was a state rarity. Its small size makes it easy to overlook." What a great field trip! ✧



Marilyn Barker and Mel Langdon of Anchorage  
Photo courtesy of Leanna Ballard



Volunteers Paul Knight and Mike Mungoven help replace old boards on the Calvin and Coyle trail

## Trail Upgrades!

This summer KHLT Stewardship staff and volunteers completed some much needed upgrades to the Calvin and Coyle Nature and Effler trails. The work included; kiosk improvements, expanding the Effler trail parking area, and adding new and replacing old boards on the Calvin and Coyle boardwalk. Thank you to Cassidy Soistman for donated funds raised in her 2014 "Calvin and Coyle Canter" ski race, The Homer Foundation, Spenard's Building Center, and to all our amazing volunteers for your help! For more information on KHLT trails, visit our website at [www.kachemaklandtrust.org](http://www.kachemaklandtrust.org).



KHLT staff and volunteer Shirley Fedora having fun while working on Calvin and Coyle Nature Trail



KHLT's 16th Annual Gala at Wasabi's in Homer on October 14  
Photo courtesy of Chistina Whiting

## KHLT's Annual Gala

Thank you to everyone who made our 16th Annual Gala, Open Spaces and Wild Places, such a great event. We couldn't do it without you!

This event was made possible by the generous support of our sponsors Ulmer's Drug & Hardware and Alaska Wildland Adventures.



Alaska Wildland  
Adventures

**Ulmer's**  
Drug & Hardware



Volunteer Elisa Russ displays art work up for auction by Board member, Marian Beck / Photo courtesy of Chistina Whiting



Donna Aderhold helps with biological assessment



Mark Kenniker, Emily Read and their dog Ruby on the beach in Homer  
Photo courtesy of Emily Read

## Volunteers Rock!

**KHLT** volunteers are so important to our conservation work. Here, Board member Donna Aderhold helps with a biological assessment of a Land Trust property on the Anchor River.

If you're interested in volunteering in our office or out in the field, give us a call! (907) 235-LAND. ✧

## Trip to Zion Raffle

**M**ark Kenniker of Homer was the lucky winner of our Trip to Zion! Raffle. His lucky ticket was drawn during our annual gala at Wasabi's on October 14. Congratulations Mark! We thank Diane and Michael McBride for donating their lovely home in Springdale, Utah for this fantastic fundraiser, and to the anonymous donor of the Alaska Airline miles to get the winners there! ✧



In June, KHLT was a vendor at Kenai Watershed Forum's Kenai River Fest in Soldotna. The annual event celebrates the Kenai River through free, family fun. Visit us at the 2018 event and be sure to bring a teen to participate in our Teen Photo Challenge. This year's grand prize was a zip-line adventure pass for two at Stoney Creek Canopy Adventures in Seward. Fun!



**Kachemak Heritage Land Trust**  
315 Klondike Avenue  
Homer, Alaska 99603

Non-Profit  
PRESORT  
STANDARD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Homer, Alaska  
Permit #67

**CHANGE SERVICE  
REQUESTED**



*Conserving the natural heritage of the Kenai Peninsula for future generations.*

[www.KachemakLandTrust.org](http://www.KachemakLandTrust.org)

Printed on 50% recycled paper.



## **KHLT and YOU**

Please join us as we move forward with our important conservation work protecting fish, bird, and wildlife habitat as well as recreational lands for the future. By working together, we can make a difference! Thank you for your continued support.

*– The KHLT Board and Staff*



Consider giving ahead  
to future generations by  
including the Land Trust  
in your estate plans.

Photo courtesy of Erik Niebuhr