

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 17, 2007

### **North Olympic Land Trust welcomes newest board members**

Retired geography professor Dr. Crane S. Miller, real estate attorney Rob Onnen, and financial adviser Anna L. Shields are the newest members of North Olympic Land Trust's Board of Directors.

They were elected at the April 17 monthly Land Trust Board meeting.

#### **Dr. Crane Miller**



Dr. Miller moved to Sequim after more than three decades of service in the California State University (CSU) system. His most recent position was Director of the EPA-funded California Urban Research and Education Center (CUEREC) at CSU East Bay (formerly Hayward).

Prior to that and during his tenure as a Professor of Geography at CSU Pomona he developed and implemented an undergraduate major program in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and directed several federally-funded (National Science Foundation or NSF) programs in geographic education and several state-funded (mostly Calif. State Water Quality Control Bd.).

His extensive experience more recently includes serving as Director of GIS Programs at Camosun Community College's Idea Centre in Victoria, B.C., and Visiting Hedco Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Redlands, California, as well as participating in the development of the General Plan for the City of La Habra Heights, California.

He said his interest in serving on the Land Trust Board comes from a "deep-seated professional and personal interest in environmental resource conservation," based on some 35 years of professional experience and education. That education included graduate training in land use and open space planning with the University of Alberta and City of Edmonton, Canada, and application of the California Land Conservation Act related to protection of agricultural lands. He earned doctoral, as well as undergraduate degrees from the University of California at Los Angeles.

"I've come to the firm belief that one of the most viable means of achieving responsible and lasting stewardship of any regional environment is via the vigorous pursuit of establishing conservation easements," he said.

Conservation easements, the legal term for the permanent voluntary agreements the Land Trust establishes with property owners, are the primary tool the nonprofit organization uses to protect such special qualities of land as salmon and wildlife habitat, farmland, sustainable timberland, clean water and air, scenic vistas, open space and historic areas.

## **Rob Onnen**



Onnen, who grew up on a farm in Iowa, said he especially appreciates the Land Trust's efforts to protect agricultural and other special qualities of area lands.

"I love the rural atmosphere here in Clallam County," he said.

Since moving to Port Angeles from Boise, Idaho, a few years ago, he has served on the boards of the Port Angeles Regional Chamber of Commerce and Habitat for Humanity. In Boise, his board memberships included Neighborhood Housing Services and Better Business Bureau. He also has served as a director for the University of Iowa Alumni Association.

He facilitates tax-deferred real estate exchanges nationwide as a Certified Exchange Specialist.

## **Anna Shields**



Shields has lived on the Olympic Peninsula for more than 30 years, 22 of which in Clallam County. She currently serves on the Finance Board and Social and Economic committees of Soroptimist International Port Angeles Jet Set. Previous leadership positions included the Finance Board of Strait View Credit Union; Board and Financial Advisor to several national healthcare organizations; regional, national and international peer group leader of MUSE (Medical Users Software Exchange); and president of a company providing consulting services and products to the healthcare community. She also was asked provide expertise in Washington, D.C., related to Medicare.

Currently, Shields is a financial advisor with Smith Barney in Port Angeles. After 11 years of traveling full-time, she said she is pleased to be at home again, and utilizing her financial background, skills and time to help her community, professionally and personally. Using her skills in governance, management, team building and finance to help with the Land Trust's continuing efforts to preserve natural resources in Clallam County is of particular interest, she said.

"Having hiked every river on the North Olympic Peninsula, I have a vested interest in preservation of our beautiful land, air and water," she said, noting that she likes the Land Trust's emphasis on contributing to stability and sustainability.

Land Trust President Ken Sweeney said increasing requests for the organization's services make it especially important to maintain an active Board of Directors. He encouraged people who are interested in learning more about North Olympic Land Trust, including possibilities for involvement, to attend one of the monthly Conservation Conversations in the Land Trust office, 104 N. Laurel, Suite 114. The next session is Tuesday, May 22, from noon to 1:00 p.m. Registration is important because space is limited, he said.