



# Corn from the Cob

## Stanley Park Earthen Architecture project nearing completion

*The little building that started as a dream is fast becoming reality. With the project slated for completion in mid-September, construction has progressed steadily throughout the summer. The new cob popcorn stand features a reclaimed granite foundation,*

artful corn cob sculpted windows, reclaimed wood serving window and floors, a living green roof, certified eco-lumber and a charm all its own. What truly sets this structure apart from any other however, has less to do with materials and more to do with community. The momentum and interest generated by this project has been remarkable; it is truly a labour of love.

To date, over 200 volunteers have expressed an interest in the project, with close to 100 actively participating



in the construction process. A diverse group of differing ethnic background, age and occupation, they range from schoolchildren to engineers, architects and artists. To date, our youngest volunteer is only three years of age. Families and grandparents have come to get dirty and lend a hand in the construction of this exciting project.

*"One of the great things about cob is how it brings people together. It has been great meeting and getting to know people from such diverse ages and backgrounds and yet with similar interests. This project has definitely created a sense of community; a place where we share our ideas, share our food, share each other's company, and share good times." - Jeremy Braacx, Cob Volunteer*

Located in the Children's Farmyard and Miniature Railway area of the park, visitor traffic to the site is high. At

### **CAPERS COMMUNITY MARKETS PARTNERSHIP!**

*We are excited to announce Capers Community Markets sponsorship of our new organic popcorn stand! With their generous support, the society can proudly sell certified organic popcorn and continue to offer educational and environmental programs to our visitors. Now, both the structure itself and the popcorn we sell are lessening the Society's ecological footprint.*

*Capers Community Markets is Canada's leading natural and organic foods retailer with three locations in Greater Vancouver. Since its founding in 1985, Capers has been an active member in its local communities through its support of several grassroots organizations and charitable causes aimed at creating positive change in the areas of community, environment, hunger, and health. Throughout its history as a Vancouver-based company, Capers has raised more than \$1 million for worthy non-profit organizations in the Greater Vancouver Regional District. For more information about Capers Community Markets, please visit [www.capersmarkets.com](http://www.capersmarkets.com).*

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times construction slows as volunteers take time to engage with the public, reaching an estimated 300 people a day. Project Ambassadors talk to visitors about the merits of this innovative project and encourage them to help out and get dirty. Children are mesmerized, adults intrigued. Many take off their shoes and assist the construction for a while. Visitors range from locals to tourists who have seen similar construction methods used in their home countries and feel a sense of kinship with the structure. No matter their age or background, one thing is certain; everyone walks away from the site with a greater understanding of sustainable natural building. Many, with smiling faces and dirty feet, dream of someday constructing their own cob garden shed or retreat.



Why has this project been such a success?

*"The most appealing thing about building with cob is the necessity of building it with people. It refuses to be an isolating experience. There is room for music, conversation, bare feet and imagination. And at the end*

*of the day, you can see your progress, however slow, measured by the mud under your fingernails and between your toes. There is little that is quite so satisfying as being covered in dirt."*

*- Surya Govender, Cob Volunteer*

Although construction of cob might be "absolutely hard work!" (Michael Sean Symonds, Starbucks Cob Volunteer), it is also playful and fun. *"I see this as the urban equivalent of a barn-raising. You might not know all of your neighbors, but it doesn't matter."*-Paulla Maxey, Volunteer

Youth engagement and financial support have also been key to the success of the project. Three youth from the Environmental Youth Alliance have been working steadily. Learning about cob building and talking to the public are skills they will take with them after construction is complete. We would like to thank the Vancouver Park Board, Capers Community Markets, BCIT Green Roof Research Unit, UBC Faculty of Engineering, Starbucks Coffee Company, Eco-lumber Co-op and Mountain Equipment Co-op for contributing cash and material support to the project. For a complete listing of donors see the back page.

*"The people I've met have been the best part of the whole project. Cob is also wonderful for deep-ening our sense of attachment to our natural surroundings. It encourages us to think of the structures we build as components of a dynamic living system rather than as things to be imposed upon the landscape."* - Neil Bruder, Cob Volunteer

As the park begins to empty of summer visitors and the children return to school, Vancouver's biggest little building will remain; the creation of many, property of none. It has firmly integrated community into

the ecology of Stanley Park and thus created a beautiful legacy for future generations of residents and visitors alike.

For more information on this exciting project, including a photo diary of the project from start to finish, visit <http://www.stanleyparkcob.ca> or contact Kristi Tatebe, Cob Project Leader phone 604.681.7099 or email [kristi@stanleyparkecology.ca](mailto:kristi@stanleyparkecology.ca)

*Kristi Tatebe*



## **RESEARCH & CODE DEVELOPMENT**

*Three participants attended a cob workshop intensive held at UBC, constructing a 50% scale model of the building from start to finish. Participants learned the basics of mixing and building with cob, installing doors and windows, and framing a roof. The resulting model will be tested in early September in the UBC Civil Engineering Earthquake Laboratory to determine the seismic resistance of cob. A UBC Civil Engineering Co-op student is overseeing the research, which will also include component testing of cob mixes. Code development engineers with the city and the office of the Chief Building Official are awaiting the results. It is hoped that this research will enable the development of a natural building code for the city, leading to larger natural structures in the city's parks.*



## THE WAIT IS OVER... THE URBAN STEWARDS MANUAL HAS ARRIVED!

Science is a very important subject these days, with fluctuations in climate, endangered species and pollution lurking around every corner. Most of these problems are the results of human activity and population growth. So what do we do? We inspire the next generation to understand, care for and take action to help their environment! This may sound like a daunting task but we've developed a resource that makes it easier. We are very pleased to announce the release of the Stanley Park Ecology Society's *Urban Stewards* Manual. This science resource is for grade 4-7 teachers to use in the classroom and to get their students outside.

The *Urban Stewards* Manual is a collection of lessons about the natural environment where the students are challenged to become stewards, or protectors of areas that are part of a local ecosystem. *Urban Stewards* has been under development for several years, starting as a SPES-led program. Now the program has evolved into a stand-alone manual where teachers can implement and lead environmental education activities themselves, making it more accessible and applicable across the province. The manual consists of 12 lessons, ranging from ecosystems to plants to climate change and everything in between. Each lesson includes a background section so that teachers can acquaint themselves with each subject. Also included are: step-by-step instructions for each hands-on activity; worksheets; answer keys; illustrations; glossaries; and

curriculum connections in not only Science but also Social Studies, Personal Planning, Fine Arts, Physical Education, Math and Language Arts. One of the goals of the manual is to take the "stress" out of teaching science, making it a fun and educational experience for not only the students but for the teachers as well.

*"The manual is a great resource. The lessons are easy to follow with background information for the non-science teacher! It makes science fun for the kids and the teacher."*

*- Kelly Watson, teacher*

*"I really enjoyed the emphasis on working in areas close to the school as a class could get out into the 'real world lab' in a single teaching block."*

*- Brian Herrin, retired teacher*

Urban Stewards also celebrated its first successful workshop in June. Teachers from Vancouver, North Vancouver and Burnaby attended learning about the manual itself, how to use it and even got a chance to try a selection of the activities. Both workshop and manual were very well received.

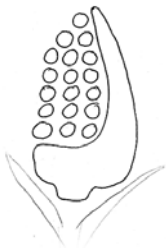
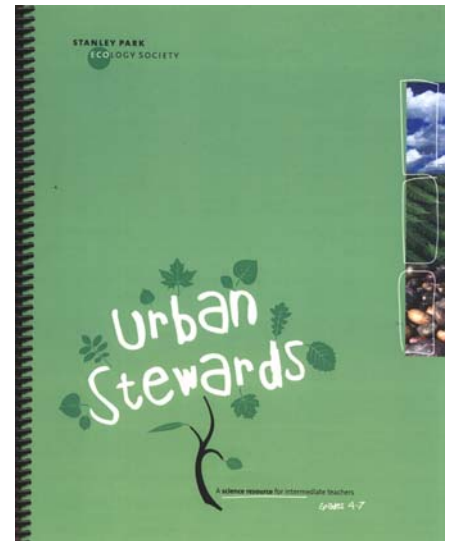
*"Urban Stewards is a highly engaging environmental program that will be of great benefit to students and*

*teachers. It not only promotes environmental stewardship through active learning but also meshes it with good Science teaching."* - John Price, Vancouver School Board, Curriculum consultant and teacher

The next workshop will be in partnership with the Vancouver School Board held on October 22nd in Stanley Park. If you are interested or would like further information please call us at 604.257.6907.

Thank you to our sponsors for supporting the development of this exciting resource: Vancouver Foundation, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and Business Objects. We would also like to thank the members of our volunteer working group for helping to make the resource a valuable teaching tool.

*Niki Cook*



### Cob Popcorn Stand Grand Opening Celebration

You are invited to attend this celebration for the Stanley Park Earthen Architecture Project from 1:00pm to 3:00pm on Saturday, September 18th 2004 at the Miniature Railway Plaza

An opening ceremony will be held, Capers organic popcorn will be available, and the building will be on display for viewing. Media and local dignitaries, as well as project sponsors will be in attendance. Entertainment and refreshments will be available. Come out and celebrate this fine example sustainable building in our cities!

# autumn nature

# programs



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## DISCOVERY WALKS

Venture out into Stanley Park on a two-hour guided walking tour with a naturalist or local expert. Walk topics and leaders vary. Leave from the Nature House every Sunday at 1 pm. RAIN OR SHINE! \$5 public / \$3 members. Suitable for adults. Nature House Winter Hours of Operation: Saturday and Sunday 9:30am to 4:30pm

**SEP 5 Insect Biotech - Secrets of the Insect World** In this last walk of the series, Andrew Scott explains how insects are physically adapted for survival. No wonder they have been around for so long!

**SEP 12 How Coal Peninsula in Stanley Park was formed** Enjoy a guided walk with naturalist Peter Woods into the world of the elements - rocks and minerals, waves and tides, currents, wind, and rain. Learn to read pages from the geological history of Stanley Park and gain an appreciation for the processes that continue to shape the active edge of the North American continent.

**SEP 19 Life of the Shore** Meet naturalist Peter Woods and the plants and animals that inhabit the upper, middle, and lower levels of the intertidal zone. Get to know the seaweeds and some of the shore's burrowers, crawlers, and more sedentary life forms. Discover the marvelous inventions so-called 'primitive' animals employ to live on or under rocks and sand.

**SEP 26 In celebration of BC Rivers Day** Join Andrew Scott in an expedition to track down insects inhabitants of BC's rivers who live in Stanley Park. Learn how the last glaciation affected insect species and how they are fighting to reclaim the river environment.

**OCT 3 Annual Mushroom Walk** Don't miss this one-time event with renowned botanist Terry Taylor. What are mushrooms doing and why are they so important? Learn their names and the vital role they play in the forest.

**OCT 10 Returning Ducks & Waterbirds** Large flocks of wintering ducks and seabirds are returning to Stanley Park. Learn more about identification and their watery lifestyles on a walk around Lost Lagoon and Second Beach with birder Cathy Aitchison.

**OCT 17 Feathers, Forests and Foreshoes** Curious about swan songs and Harlequin romances? Want to dabble in ducks or dive right in? Wade into waterfowl with naturalist Murray Lashmar.

**OCT 24 Women's History Month Historical Walking Tour, 1850-1914** Come celebrate Women's History Month with historical interpreter Jolene Cumming and examine the lives of the women who played a crucial role in Stanley Park's history.

**OCT 31 Alien Invasions** Alien species is a topic of great concern among scientists worldwide. Join leader Yona Sipos Randor to learn why, who they are and what we are doing to overcome this problem in Stanley Park.

**NOV 7 Discovering Autumn Glory** A wide variety of mature trees makes Stanley Park one of Vancouver's best places to witness the changing of the trees. Stroll the grassy parkland near Malkin Bowl with Park Board arborist Bill Stephen to discover how nature saves her most colourful apparel for the last.

**NOV 14 The Altered Forest** Prior to its becoming a park in 1889, this forested peninsula was selectively logged and fires burned from Lost Lagoon to Beaver Lake. Our walk looks for signs of these disturbances and examines changes in forest composition, wildlife, and ecology.

**NOV 21 Divers and Dabblers** Ducks and other waterfowl are among the easiest bird species to learn to identify, and Stanley Park in winter is one of the best places to see lots of them. Join birder Cathy Aitchison to learn about their lifestyles and discover how they co-exist.

**NOV 28 Birds of Burrard Inlet** Find out about swimming, diving, and wading winter birds with Peter Woods; who they are, where they came from, what brings them here, and how long they'll stay.

**DEC 5 The Edge of Winter** Looking for ideas on how to get through the winter? Join naturalist Murray Lashmar and find out how other animals and plants do it

in



# stanley park

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### BIRDING IN STANLEY PARK

The last Sunday of every month at 9am  
**SEP 26                      OCT 31                      NOV 28**

Join naturalist Al Grass for a 2-hour tour in Stanley Park to identify migratory and resident birds and learn bird watching skills. Meet at the Nature House.

By donation.

### DROP-IN TOURS

#### The Women of Stanley Park:1850-1914

The first Saturday of every month 10am  
**SEP 4                      OCT 2                      NOV 6**

In this 2-hour tour Historical Interpreter Jolene Cumming explores the lives of the famous and the forgotten women of Stanley Park who either lived in or visited the park in this time period including women of diverse heritage. Meet at the Nature House.

\$10 public, \$8 members/seniors/students

### WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH SLIDE PRESENTATION

#### With West End Community Centre

**OCT 12**

Come celebrate with historical interpreter Jolene Cumming and examine the lives of the women who played a crucial role Stanley Park's history. This slide show will explore the lives of both the famous and forgotten women who lived in or visited the park during this significant time period.

By donation. Suggested \$3 - \$8

When: 7:30pm - 9:00pm

Where: West End Com Ctr, 870 Denman St

## NATURE STORY & CRAFT

*Nature games, stories and crafts for 3- to 6-year-olds. A fun way to learn about local plants and animals! First and third Saturdays of each month at 11 am at the Nature House. \$2 per child, free for members and parents.*

**SEP 4 Interesting Insects** Do insects have 2 legs, 4, 6, 8 or none at all? Come and learn what makes an insect an insect and find out some fun and interesting facts about these creepy, crawly creatures! Create butterfly and ladybug crafts too.

**SEP 18 Oceans and You!** Come learn about the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup - how garbage and oceans are connected and what you can do this fall to help.

**OCT 2 Outstanding Oceans** Come and find out what creatures live under the seas and oceans and how they live. Make beautiful ocean paintings to take home with you!

**OCT 16 Things that DON'T go bump in the Night - Bats!** Come learn how they see in the dark and where to find them in Vancouver. Make your own bat pin.

**NOV 6 Wonderful Waterfowl!** Come and discover all of Lost Lagoon's wonderful ducks, grebes and loons with fun games, crafts and stories!

**NOV 20 Exciting Eagles** Come learn about these intelligent birds and make your own eagle mask.



## STANLEY PARK IVY BUSTERS

Join our Fine De-Vine team on this stewardship project to control the expansion of English Ivy in Stanley Park. Volunteers will be removing this 'super' invasive species, which is known to create "ivy deserts" by establishing itself as the predominant groundcover in many of the large urban forests of the Pacific Northwest. English Ivy is significant problem in 28 US States and is on the State Noxious Weed List of both Oregon and Washington. This project is a partnership between the Stanley Park Ecology Society and the Vancouver Park Board

For information and dates check our website or call @ 604.718.6522

## HALLOWEEN FUN!

\*NEW Creatures of the Night Walks

This year the *Creatures of the Night Walks* will incorporate new elements of dramatic presentation as well as live action!

Don't miss this unique opportunity to walk with some of the scariest night creatures in Stanley Park. You'll have a face-to-face encounter these incredible inhabitants of the shadows: bats, owls and spiders. But don't be too afraid because they are our friends!

EVERY FRIDAY AND SATURDAY @ THE HALLOWEEN GHOST TRAIN

**OCT 1 THROUGH OCT 9**

Fridays & Saturdays at 7, 8 and 9pm

**OCT 15 THROUGH OCT 30**

Fri's & Sat's at 7, 7:30, 8, 8:30, 9, 9:30pm

## GHOST TRAIN MEMBERS NIGHT

SPES Members and their immediate family (max 4) ride free on Preview Night of the Ghost Train Miniature Railway Halloween Event at Stanley Park.

**When:** Thurs. Sept 30 2004, 6:30-9pm

**Where:** Miniature Railway and Children's Farmyard Plaza

\* **Bring membership card**

For more information call 604.257.6908 or info@stanleyparkecology.ca



## IVY BUSTERS: STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

The forest is a swarm of red shirts moving through the deep green of plant life. Adults, teens and children bending, heaving, and pulling ivy vines until they come loose from the soil. They pile the remains in heaps for collection later. They're removing English Ivy from Stanley Park. Working over five Sunday mornings with a total of 145 volunteers we've removed about 10,000 square metres (one hectare) of Ivy so far this summer. Impressive! But with an estimated 25 hectares of Ivy-infested area to go, we have only just begun.



*SPES Ivy Busting Volunteers July 18, 2004*

The Ivy Busters project is one of SPES's newest efforts, a partnership between our organization and the Vancouver Park Board. It's a stewardship project, meaning it's a project where people are actively involved in taking care of the natural environment. The project permits volunteers to contribute directly to managing the natural area of Stanley Park. Heather Barnes, a summer co-op student and the project's coordinator, says: "Ivy Busters is a great way for anyone to come out and make a real, tangible difference in Stanley Park, all with only a few hours of physical work per month!"

English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) is not native to North America. Originally from Europe, it is often used as a

horticultural ground cover because it easily forms a dense green mat on highway roadsides and in public gardens. Unfortunately for our local ecology, birds (such as the European Starling) disperse its seeds and people dispose of garden waste in parks and forests where it spreads unchecked. Once introduced, Ivy is very invasive and outcompetes native species in shaded places. Over the last forty years the plant has invaded and overwhelmed the native vegetation in many urban forested areas of the west coast, where it thrives in the absence of harsh winters.



*English Ivy forms dense ground cover and is also a tree climbing vine.*

Ivy causes two big problems. It covers the ground and chokes out the native herbs and bushes. Eventually it kills everything else as it forms a dense mat over the forest floor. Native animals do not use Ivy as food or shelter anywhere near as much as they use native plants. Animal numbers are diminished when Ivy takes over the forest. Ivy also

threatens trees. The advancing tendrils find tree trunks and climb up them towards the light. The vine stems get older and thicker, reaching up to 8 inches in diameter if left to grow unhindered. They gradually add to a tree's weight, threatening to overbalance it in a windstorm. In response, there are Ivy removal projects underway in other parks in the Lower Mainland, and as far south as Oregon.

The Park Board has been worried about harm to the forest from English Ivy for many years. Forestry maintenance staff initiated work to control ivy in the early 1980's. Park workers regularly cut the vines on trees at ground level. Sharp-eyed visitors may notice now-dead and leafless Ivy stems still attached to tree trunks in many places in Stanley Park. However Park staff has never had enough available workers to really attack the problem on the ground. Eric Meagher, Supervisor of maintenance of Stanley Park, has been an enthusiastic initiator and partner with SPES on the Ivy Busters project. The Park Board has provided cutting equipment, safety vests and gloves, and staff members to deal with more serious equipment and to cut tree-growing vines during our volunteer days.

An Ivy Pull takes about three hours on a weekend morning. Volunteers first gather upstairs in the Pavilion. They get a brief introduction to the problems caused by Ivy, the tools and techniques of its removal, and tips about safety. Then it's off to the forest. People quickly learn how to pull the vines from underneath the soil, when to pull and when to cut with pruning shears, and how to avoid harming those native plants which have not yet been overcome. And they are amazed

## IVY CONTINUED

to discover just how many roots those plants actually have. No wonder they are taking over the forest!



*In flat locations where the Ivy forms a dense layer which has eliminated all other vegetation (note the ground cover behind the workers) it can be removed with the 'carpet roll' technique.*

Ivy pulling is hard work but the reward is immediate as you see the huge piles of ivy being removed and the native plants standing free to grow. While the removal is a large first step, the recovery process will take another year or two for seeds and underground runners from native species to revegetate the areas freed from English Ivy.

In early July three people from the SPES Ivy Busters project went to Portland, Oregon to see a much larger Ivy management program in action. They visited Forest Park, an intensely-Ivy infested urban forest about five times larger than Stanley Park.

Forest Park has become the center of a major effort to control the species, called "No Ivy League." They use weekend volunteer groups, summer-long youth crews and year-round high school teams to remove vines from trees and the ground. They also have scientific studies underway with local university students and faculty. The SPES team learned a lot from Forest Park's ten years of Ivy Busting experience, and agreed to continue cooperation and information sharing with them.

English Ivy is only one of many invasive non-native plant species that cause difficulties in forests, agricultural land, and water bodies around the world. We are working on it first because it is the most harmful plant in Stanley Park. But there are others in the park too. White Water Lily clogs Beaver Lake. Himalayan

Blackberry crowds out native species at the west end of Lost Lagoon. There are spots with Scotch Broom, English Holly and Purple Loosestrife. They too could become targets of our stewardship efforts and places where volunteers can help preserve the natural environment of the park. You'll hear more about them in the future.

Ivy Busters is made possible by the generous support of Eco Action, Environment Canada's Community Funding Program, VanCity and the Public Conservation Assistance Fund of the Province of British Columbia.



*Ivy Busting is a family affair. This group removes ivy from a fallen log.*

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OCT 13 2004

**When:** Wednesday October 13th 2004, 7-9pm. Check-in starts at 6:30pm.

**Where:** Second floor of the Dining Pavilion

**Special Guest Speaker:** Rick Searle is a professor, activist, author and past host of the tv show Environmental on the New VI. "Phantom Parks: The Struggle to Save Canada's National Parks" is an independent analysis of the commercialization of our National Parks.

**Parking:** Free after 6pm (after October 1st)

**Contact:** Vicki 604.257.6908 or [info@stanleyparkecology.ca](mailto:info@stanleyparkecology.ca)

***\*\*Everyone welcome!\*\****



## OUR PURPOSE

The Stanley Park Ecology Society (SPES) is a community-based, not for profit organization dedicated to encouraging stewardship of our natural world through environmental education and action.

SPES provides: public programs for adults and families; school programs for elementary school children; and wildlife information and resources promoting coexistence between people and our wild neighbours.

SPES gratefully acknowledges the sustaining support of:



## MAKE A DONATION TODAY

Your membership and donation support the SPES Nature House, Vancouver's only Nature Interpretive Centre, and helps put our naturalists in the classrooms and on the trails of Stanley Park connecting city people with nature.

**Please give today.** Contribute \$25, \$50 or \$100 dollars today and we will immediately put your donation to work connecting more people with nature through low-cost or free programs and opportunities.

SPES is a registered charity: 11916 6890 RR0001

## CONTACT US

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## STANLEY PARK ECOLOGY SOCIETY

Connecting People with Nature

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

We are delighted to introduce to you our new Director of Development & Communications, Nicholas Scapillati.

Nicholas worked for many years with the David Suzuki Foundation in a number of positions with increasing levels of responsibility. He began his work there as researcher for David's book *The Sacred Balance*. From there he worked on a variety of projects as project manager on the restoration of Vancouver's Last Wild Salmon Stream and on the launch of the Nature Challenge, through a cross-Canada tour featuring top Canadian entertainers. Most recently, Nicholas helped found the Musquem Ecosystem Conservation Society where he resides as a board member.

He has a great deal of experience in generalized fundraising including acquiring corporate sponsorships, individual and in-kind donations. He has exceptional communications, media and special event skills. He comes with "star-quality" references from the aforementioned groups. Nicholas is consistently described as extremely creative, passionate, dedicated, intelligent, and likeable. He has the ability to attract the right people to any project.

Nicholas lives in the west end of Vancouver with his partner Kathleen. Together they enjoy beach cruising the Stanley Park seawall and planning their next wilderness travel adventure.

## THANKS TO OUR COB DONORS

Down to Earth Building Bee    TEK Roofing    Impact Demolition  
Ocean Construction Services    Holt Glass    Magnet Hardware  
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Roundhouse Community Centre    Bruce Cassels  
Verdir Systems Inc.    F & M Glass  
I. Chen Architect    Sandy Congram



## THANKS TO OUR DONORS

SPES thanks the following individuals & organizations for their recent donations:

Lisa Thompson    Philippa Mennell    Kristine Lampa  
Cathy O'Connor-Morris    Joyce Prior    Doug Wilson  
Kelly Quinlan    Jerry Miehm    Dik Vonk  
Christine Spinder    Jenny Hsui-Ching Chen

