

December 20, 2019



## *Farewell from our Founders!*

This farewell message comes from both of us — Joleen and Naomi — as we take our last opportunity to greet you with a holiday letter to the Stillwaters family.

At the Annual Dinner on November 3, we were honored royally on the occasion of our retirement. We are finally wrapping up here in the office in the next couple months, and will soon be enjoying the next phase of life in retirement. We are not going far—we'll remain next door to Stillwaters—but our role will soon be as volunteers.

Many of you may not know that we have a lot in common. We both grew up as the youngest in our families, and the only girl in a houseful of very big brothers. This shapes one's personality. You get spoiled, as the only girl, which makes you used to being able to make things happen the way you want.

But with Big Brothers surrounding us, we had to work hard, play hard, and be very determined — to not get lost in the crowd. We learned to work to get what we wanted, whether it was to play football or ride on motorcycles or just to get our share at the dinner table!

What all this taught us is what we have learned to call **resolve** — something that has been critical in getting us and Stillwaters to where we are today. Some call it “determination”. Some just call it “stubbornness”. But there is more to **being resolved**.

**Resolve** is broader, and it involves seeing the big picture and vision that others may not see and then working hard to get us there. The newest [Magnolia Journal](#) resonates with us:

“**Resolve** can manifest as both grit and contentment:

- ◆ I will resolve to set my own course and I am resolved in the lot I've been given.
- ◆ It can look like both a thundering rumble and a quiet reckoning.
- ◆ It is both daring and meek.
- ◆ It can catalyze a beginning and determine an ending.

“But aside from the shape it takes, **resolve** steadies our gaze, and it wills us each to reach for the sun! And in so doing, it makes a way for beauty to bloom.”

In our life, we have looked for positive potential in even the most forgotten places. Making our way in this world and working for justice requires us to be resolved to always weave together the old and new, where we've been and where we want to go, both as individuals and as an organization.

It took every ounce of our grittiest **resolve** to get 2 bridges built for the estuary restoration, to drop

LWD on the marsh, and to do so many other projects for watershed recovery, all while advancing the science and ecosystem education of the community, our interns, and other students.

Of course, this was not our work alone, and we did not always get what we wanted when we wanted it because this is the work of the community. About 20 years ago, we listened to this land and decided to become a community-based non-profit organization, working on environmental preservation and education. The Stillwaters Tribe was born as many community members joined us and participated with us. It's been one of our joys to see the community interacting with and aware of this treasure of land.

You have been a part of Stillwaters for some time. We are so grateful to the many people like you who give Stillwaters all varieties of support and advice in the recovery phase of the estuary and watershed, help us to grow our education at many levels, and share our vision of restoring and preserving the waters that feed Puget Sound.

Some old doors are closing, and new doors are opening. We are leaving our positions here, happily anticipating the future growth of this organization. We are confidently handing over the reins to capable and forward-thinking staff, board, and volunteers. Jennifer Donaldson and Melissa Fleming will bring their very considerable skills to the oversight of the science, education, administration, and campus improvements.

They will need the support and participation of all of you — the Stillwaters Tribe. You are a key to their success, just as you were to us.

Our advice to them and to all of you is this:

**Think Big and Be Visionary!** But be **RESOLVED** to sacrifice and work hard! Because it is hard work, and sometimes gritty, but, from our experience, it brings great satisfaction and contentment. Thanks for joining us in this work!

**Happy Solstice!**

*Joleen Naomi*

Joleen Palmer & Naomi Maasberg, for the Board and Staff of Stillwaters Environmental Education Center

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