



**Buckner  
Homestead**  
HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Promoting the care and preservation of the Buckner homestead, orchard,  
and community atmosphere in perpetuity

## 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

### A Very Challenging Year

*Beginning in January, the federal firing of staff, as well as hiring and budget freezes, made 2025 a difficult time from the start. Add the 43-day shutdown in October and November, with no staffing at the Orchard, and this was a very challenging year from end to end.*

*Because of your support, both volunteering and financially, the Foundation was instrumental in providing the much-needed resources to fill these voids at a basic level.*

#### IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Following announcement of the federal freezes in January, the *Foundation Board* immediately established an internal account to directly and immediately fund needed resources, including:

- The purchase of
  - Two small electric chainsaws for pruning
  - Parts and fluids for annual maintenance of the John Deere and Cadet mowers.
  - lawn fertilizer
  - Mower tires
  - sprinklers, parts, and timers
- The Foundation fully-funded the stipends necessary for pruning the historic trees
- A later allocation of nearly \$5,000 funded a major repair of the Kabota tractor.

Totaling nearly \$15,000, this support allowed for the very basic winter maintenance, repair, and care needed just to begin work at the Orchard.

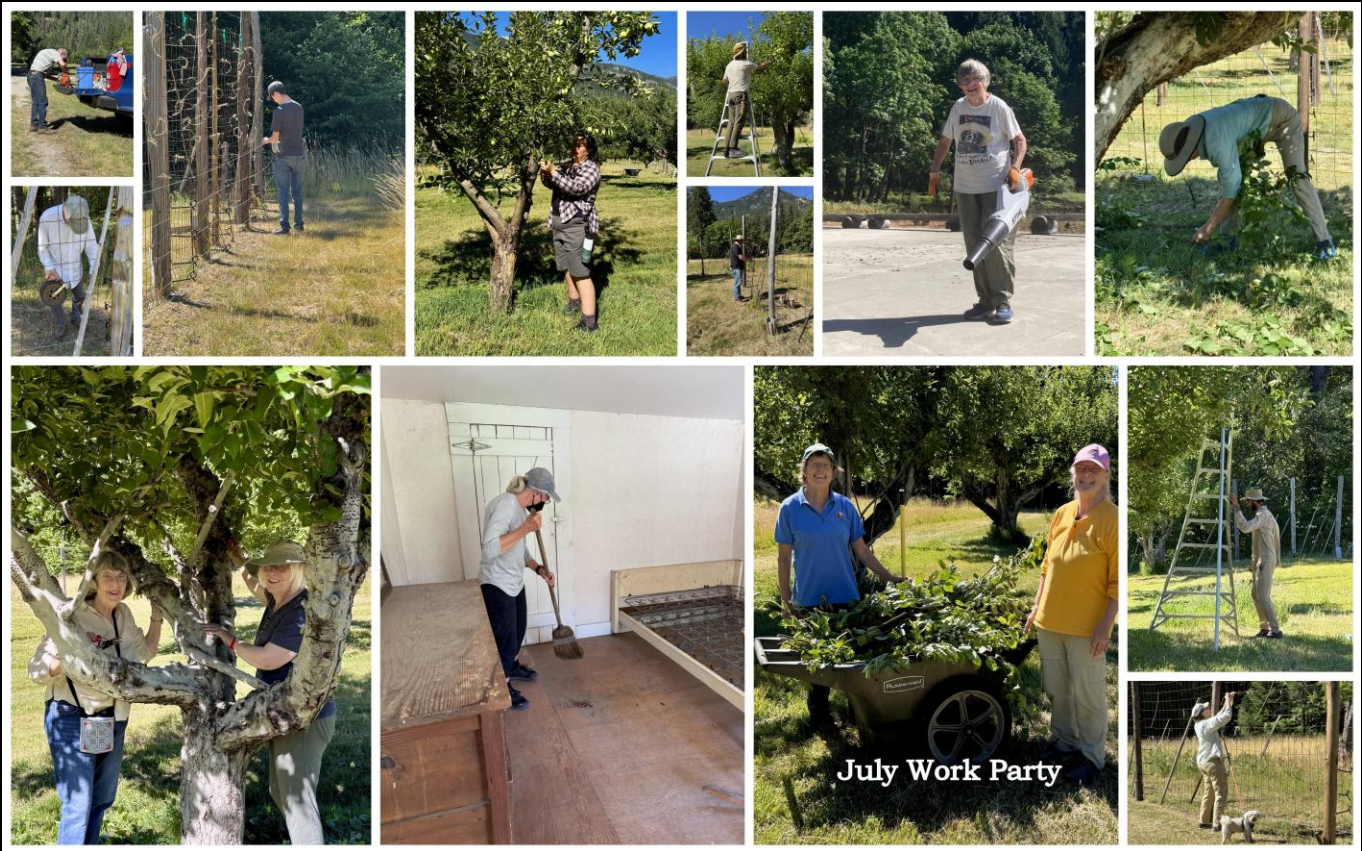
## WORK PARTIES

In June, July, and October, formal work parties were held, totaling nearly 100 volunteer hours. Coupled with individual volunteer work throughout the year, **over 400 much-needed hours were contributed.** Work included, but was not limited to:

- Equipment repair, large and small
- Fire fuel reduction around and near structures
- Structure upkeep
- Wrapping young trees for rodent protection
- Fence repair
- Installation and removal of electric fences
- Thinning apples
- Brush removal
- Invasive species removal, including *Rushskeleton Weed* and volunteer pines and firs
- Summer pruning of water suckers
- Location and creation of the Buckner Loop Trail
- Mowing, watering, and fertilizing lawns, and pruning of ornamentals
- Preparation for Harvest Fest
- Winterizing of yard hoses and sprinklers
- Spreading 8 tons of fertilizer by hand
- Removal of apples to deter bears and rodents

*Flashback – Work at the Orchard in the 1920's*





**EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

**SQUARE DANCE AT THE ORCHARD**

It was a gorgeous evening with music by the *Chelanigans* and instruction by a very patient caller! Many young families and nearly 200 folks of all ages, made this the highlight of the summer!



Mark your calendars!

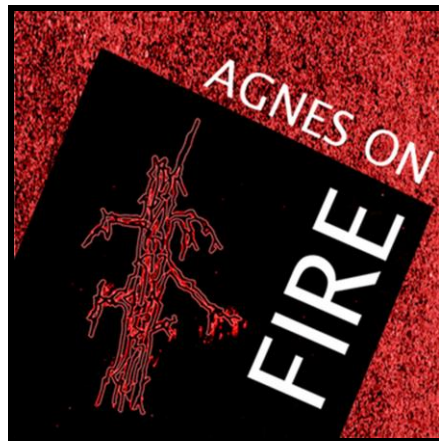
**2026 Square Dance at the Orchard**

**Saturday, August 1, 7 -10 PM**

**BE THERE AND BE SQUARE!**

## AGNES AT THE ORCHARD - The best ever!

“The best ever,” a comment heard often among the 211 in attendance, is the perfect description of a very enjoyable September evening of music and dancing at the Orchard. *Agnes on Fire* lit it up!



## HARVEST FEST 2025

A fun-filled three days of Harvest Fest capped off our season of events at the Orchard in 2025, with great fun, great music, and great food!

### Valley Music Night – Friday Evening

Held indoors at the *Stehekin School*, the many talents of the Valley were front and center! 137 attendees enjoyed the evening, and our many thanks go to those who entertained us with music and wit!



VALLEY MUSIC NIGHT 2025

### Picking, Pressing, Potluck, and Music - Saturday

By far a record, 280 attendees enthusiastically picked and pressed the *Common Delicious*, *Rome Beauty's*, and *Johnathon's* before and after another scrumptious community potluck. Chili and all the fixings were complimented by amazing salads, desserts, and other goodies. All the while, listening to *Agnes on Fire!* It was an excellent day!

Many thanks to *Chris, Candy, Mimi, Roger, Kathy, Glen* and others for their continued devotion and hard work to make this a splendid end of season celebration!



## Poetry Night - Sunday Evening

Harvest Fest 2025 concluded with *Poetry Night* at the Community Hall, and with a smaller than usual attendance. An alternate location due to the government shutdown was likely a contributing factor. The 15 who were there enjoyed readings, both personal and well-known, especially enjoying the backstories shared with each.

**POETRY NIGHT 2026 - SUNDAY OCTOBER 4 - 7 PM**

**Mark your Calendar!**

**HARVEST FEST 2026**

**October 2-4**

**A wonderful experience that gets better each year!**

## PROJECTS AND PURCHASES

**Projects** took a backseat in 2025 because of staffing and funding challenges. One project, though, was completed by volunteers, with support from the orchardist, and two other projects were advanced.

**The Buckner Loop Trial** was finished following layout, invasive species considerations, mowing, and providing a foot bridge over the old irrigation ditch.

The Loop Trail connects the existing Fishermen's Trail that originates at the restroom parking area with the turn-around on the river access road at the lower end of the Buckner pasture. A level, mowed path, this is a nice one-mile loop with some of the best views from the Homestead. The only flood damage currently known at the Orchard was the washing away of the new footbridge. Keep your eyes open for it!



**Purchases**, in addition to those listed above, included the acquisition of a 10 cubic foot dumping trailer for use with the John Deere mower. This has made hauling tools and materials much more efficient and less strenuous.

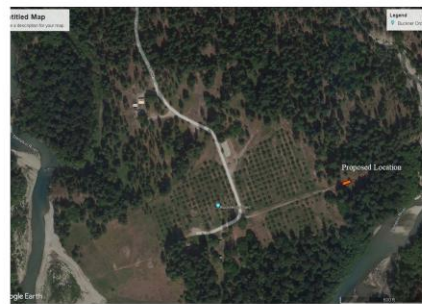
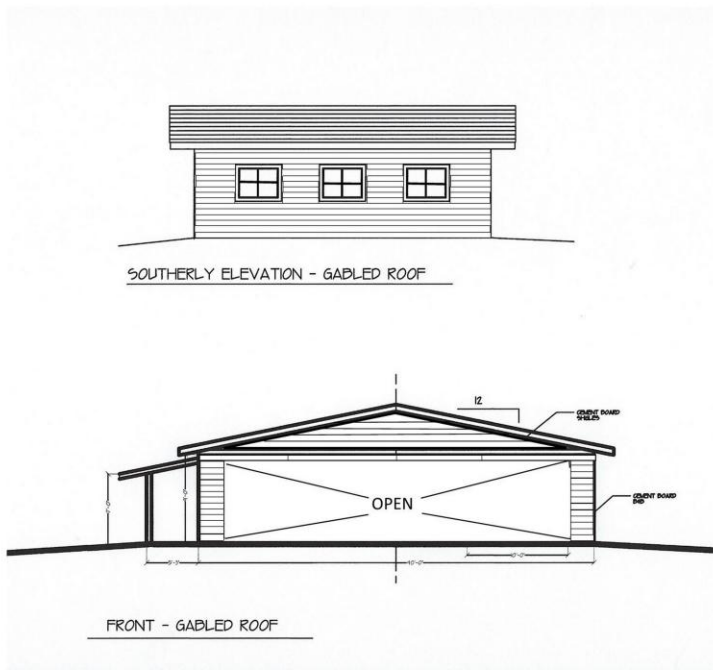
## Progress on Other Projects at the Orchard



**Drag Saw-** The recently displayed drag saw was removed in October for possible rehab, with the goal of having it operative for demonstrations. Again, it has proven too rusted to do more than provide an educational display. *7 Lakes A* of Lakewood, has gone a step further though and secured a second drag saw that can be used for demonstrations, with the Buckner saw back in its display location. A sincere Thank You, Mark and crew!

**New Storage Structure -** Progress was made on the *Foundation*-funded proposal for a much-needed, on-site, out of view, storage structure at the Orchard.

While compliance has been stalled for three years due to *NPS* staffing shortages, review and suggested changes to the initial plans were advanced during 2025, with revisions in the proposal on-going.



## BHHF - NPS ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND MORE

The *Foundation* and *NPS* enjoy a good collaborative relationship characterized by on-going and open communications, all benefiting the Buckner Homestead and Orchard.

Most notable, is a jointly developed *Annual Work Plan*, laying out in the late months of a given year, the projects, work, and efforts to be undertaken by the *Foundation* and *NPS* at the Orchard during the next calendar year. In 2025, not all work, as reported above, was completed and has been reassessed, modified as needed, and carried forward to 2026.

## PARK SERVICE ACTIVITIES AT THE BUCKNER ORCHARD



**Laurie Thompson, Orchardist** – Laurie, a long-time Park Service employee, was hired in 1996 to care for the Buckner Orchard, and does so to this day. Her dedication and love of the orchard are a special asset for both the orchard and community. Laurie enjoys sharing her work and experiences with any who ask or wish to volunteer. Along with Mack, a fellow *NPS* staffer, and with the support of *NPS Stehekin Maintenance*, the Orchard was in great hands during this challenging year!

### **In addition to the care of the orchard, and not mentioned above, *NPS* work included:**

**Invasive Species Eradication** - *NPS* continues to work to eradicate invasive species such as Rush Skeletonweed and Knapp Weed through intensive search and spraying of individual plants throughout the Homestead, as well as throughout the Valley. This is very monotonous and time-consuming work, and progress is becoming more evident each year.

**Interpretation** - Personnel services (formal and informal programming) were not available at the orchard or at the Visitors' Center due to continued budget constraints. Interpretative interaction by the orchardists and volunteers provided visitor information, as did the kiosk and printed materials.

**Rebuilding of the Firepit** – Rebuilding and cleanup around the firepit near the garden, not only made for a more usable area; it also looks more pleasing. And, the garden was planted this year!

**Special Thanks** to Aaron and *NPS Stehekin Maintenance*, (Cass, Sarah, and Forrest), for their work and support of the Orchard during this very challenging year! Frequent equipment repairs by Cass, and work by all the crew, were critical to the care of the Orchard. Thank You, all!

## Masonry Rehab, Restoration, and Conservation

Excellent masonry work by Brian, a *NPS* staffer, may well be the most significant historic preservation work done at the Orchard in several years. In various stages of deterioration, the outdoor fireplace, the historic outdoor laundry, and the swimming pool had different, but notable, work done in 2025.



YARD FIREPLACE STABILIZATION AND RESTORATION



OUTDOOR LAUNDRY PRESERVATION



SWIMMING POOL STABILIZATION

## ANNUAL FOUNDATION MEETING May 12, 2025 via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM by President Herb Sargo, with nine attendees, 8 via Zoom and one by text)

### 1. **Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Summary**

The 2024 Summary was approved following highlighting of the actions taken and reports presented. Most notable were adoption of the revised Articles of Association, election of board members and officers, adoption of the 2024 budget, and the Orchard report. (Moved by Laura Reiter, seconded by Cinda Gilbert)

### 2. **Election of Board members** to three-year terms. The following Board members were re-elected to three-year terms. (Moved by Christine Sargo, seconded by Dick Bingham)

Position #9 [Crystal Austin](#) - Chelan

Buckner Family Representative B, [Christy Libbey](#) - Manson/Stehekin

Buckner Family Representative A, [Herb Sargo](#) - Sedro-Woolley/Stehekin

### 3. **Approval of 2025-2026 Budget**

The revised draft budget was approved. This followed review of changes that reflect the uncertainty of staffing and funding in the current political climate, as well as revenues and expenditures since January 1. (Moved by Doug England, seconded by Katie Turner)

Highlights included:

- ✓ \$50,000 received in January from the Leonard and Eleanor Otto Trust as additional funding for the storage building. (NOTE - *We've been faced with externally imposed priorities, and the storage building is not among them . . . I expect this will continue throughout the summer. NCNP Superintendent Don Striker*)
- ✓ Funds totaling \$130,000 held specifically for this project do generate over \$1,000 in interest each year for the Foundation.
- ✓ A new budget category, **Stipends**, has been added reflecting the use of funds allocated for emergency support of the pruning this spring.
- ✓ The Incidentals Expenditures category has been increased to \$8,000. This will serve as a catchall for expenses not usually budgeted for that may occur as a result of cuts and shortages resulting from current national budget and staffing actions.

### 4. **Orchard Report** - Laurie Thompson

Laurie thanked the Foundation and shared how much the emergency support assured completion of this year's pruning. Support of the volunteers and use of the new electric pruning saws were specifically important.

Bloom was moderate for the Common Delicious and heavy for the Rome Beauties, very much a normal year.

No trees were lost over the winter.

The application of micronutrients was discussed and good information was contributed by Board member and Apple Industry Representative, Doug England. It was also mentioned that these applications **do not** impact the Orchard's organic status.

It was also noted that staffing at the Orchard is back to normal, following the elimination of the position, then rehiring, of Mack, the second Orchard staff member.

5. **Other** - Herb shared that the Buckner Garden has been cleaned out and is ready for planting.

We appear near to establishing a connecting trail along the river between the knoll and the road ending in the pasture.

6. **With no other business to discuss, the meeting closed at 7:40 PM.**

## OUTREACH

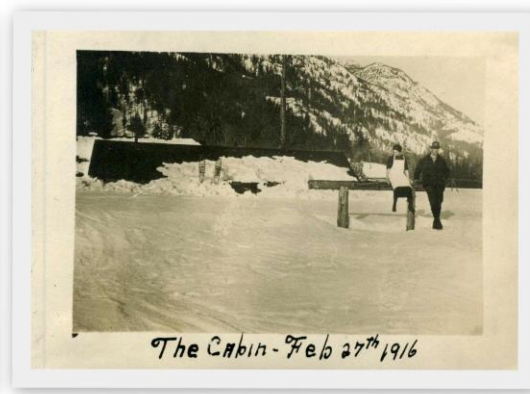
*The Foundation* continues to develop relationships with other organizations and to communicate our purpose and goals to the community via local media outlets. To that end, the following were continued during the 2025 program year.

**Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce** – Memberships were exchange between the *Foundation* and the Chamber, allowing each to be a member of the other, enhancing the presences of each in the community and beyond.

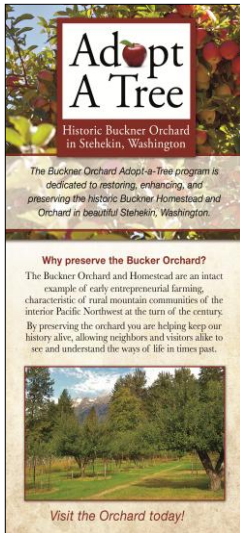
**Stehkin Guide Book** - A full-page ad featuring *BHFF*-sponsored events at the Orchard was placed in 2025 at a cost of \$315.00. The *Guide Book* is provided free of charge to visitors on the boats and elsewhere.

**Ten public communications** were sent during 2025, with reports, announcements of coming events, cancellations, and news releases to local media. The primary means of communication for the *Foundation* is e-mail, saving both time and money.

*A Retrospect - The Buzzard Cabin* Note the gate cross piece in each photo and the snow depth!



## SUPPORT



### Adopt-A-Tree

Adopt-A-Tree continues to provide funds for support of *Foundation* work at the Orchard, with 20 adoptions totaling \$516.50 in 2025. No formal promotion was undertaken this year for Adopt-A-Tree.

### Memberships

28 memberships of various levels, totaling, \$2,580.64, helped fund work and programs at the Orchard in 2025, and into the future.

### Donations

\$63,034.95 in donations were made to the *Foundation* in 2025. This included the large targeted donation and grant noted below.

## Grants and Targeted Donations

**Grants** - A grant of \$2,850 was received from *Chelan County* under the *Chelan County Lodging Tax* program to cover expenses related to the *Square Dance at the Orchard* in August. Per the grant agreement, \$310 of unused funds were returned to the County.

**Targeted Donation** - An additional donation of \$50,000 from the *Leonard and Eleanor Otto Charitable Trust* was received and will be used to facilitate the construction of the storage shed. For this generous donation, we are very grateful!

**NOTE** - Targeted donations may have little impact on our day-to-day operating budget, and do not supplant funds contributed annually to do the *Foundation's* work at the Orchard.

Please contact the *Foundation* directly if you are interested in making a donation, targeted or otherwise, to support the Orchard. All donations and contributions are tax-deductible in accordance with IRS rules and regulations.

## In-kind Contributions

Services, materials, and equipment from individuals and businesses make the work of the *Foundation* more effective and much easier. Listed here are businesses and individuals who assisted us in so many different ways in 2025, as well as in past years. This diverse support illustrates just how important the generosity and commitment by so many is needed to conserve, preserve, and keep the Buckner Orchard the jewel it is! Thank you all!

Square Dance Support - *Lake Chelan Boat Company*

Shipping and hauling - *Mountain Barge Services and Glen Smith*

Music Organizing/coordination – *Peggy Ann Courtney, Mandy Ketchell, Steve Saunders*

Loan of materials for Harvest Fest and/or Square Dance - *Mike Scherer, Stehekin Valley Ranch, Stehekin School, NPS, and Nathan Thomas*

Maintenance and continued development of our website - *Crystalview Graphics*

Donation of historic piano – *Rene and Jim Courtney* (More on this at a later date.)

Help with Taxes – *Olivia Libbey*

Publicity and Reporting – *Patty Wilsey, Lake Chelan Mirror, LC Chamber of Commerce, and KOZI radio*

Chamber of Commerce Membership - *Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce-BHMF exchange*

Facilities use - *Stehekin School, Stehekin Pastry Company, and National Park Service*

Photography - *Vicki Gempko, Laurie Thompson, Leo Christoffer, and Herb Sargo*

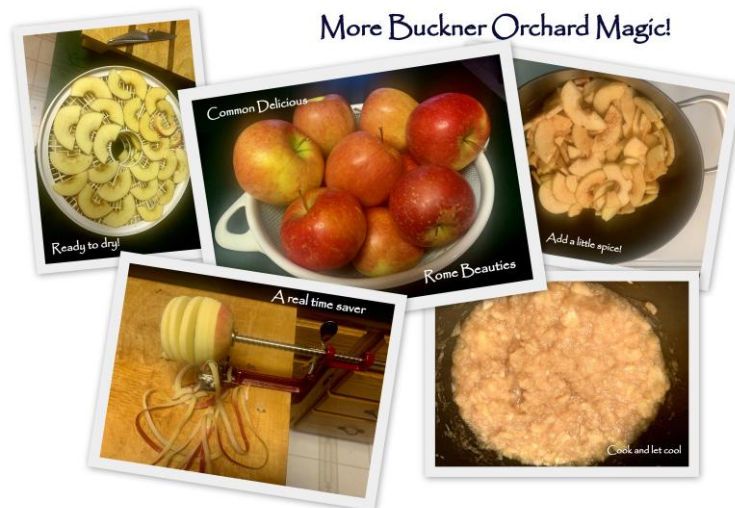
Sound System storage and management - *Liz and Tom Courtney*

Other Storage – *Nathan Thomas and NPS*

Event Transportation - *Stehekin Valley Ranch, and Stehekin Valley Adventures*

Equipment Repair – *Keith Carpenter, 7 Lakes Automotive, Mike Barnhart, and Kyle Riemer*

And, many thanks to you and all the other individuals who made our past years' work and events successful. Our volunteers are priceless! **Thank you!**



# 2025 END OF YEAR FISCAL REPORT

## 2025 END OF YEAR REPORT BUCKNER HOMESTEAD HERITAGE FOUNDATION

2025							
CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	2025 ADOPT.	FIRST QTR	SECOND QTR	THIRD QTR	FINAL	% of Adopt
<b>I. Balance Forward</b>		\$ 115,612.94	\$ 115,612.94	\$ 115,612.94	\$ 115,962.32	\$ 115,962.32	100%
<b>II. Anticipated Revenues</b>	A. Adopt A Tree	\$ 500.00	\$ 129.36	\$ 129.36	\$ 129.36	\$ 516.50	112%
	B. Donations - General Fund	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 5,278.12	\$ 7,444.95	\$ 8,144.95	\$ 10,184.95	509%
	C. Packing Shed						
	D. Memberships	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,560.54	\$ 2,177.34	\$ 2,477.34	\$ 2,580.64	86%
	E. Interest (Cashmere Valley Bank)	\$ 250.00	\$ 435.90	\$ 966.34	\$ 1,657.66	\$ 2,002.08	801%
	F. HF Raffle						
	g. Grants	\$ 2,850.00	\$ 2,850.00	\$ 2,850.00	\$ 2,850.00	\$ 2,850.00	100%
	Dedicated Donations		\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	NA
	<b>INCOME minus Dedicated</b>	\$ 8,600.00	\$ 10,253.92	\$ 13,567.99	\$ 15,259.31	\$ 68,134.17	177%
<b>FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>		\$ 104,985.46	\$ 175,866.86	\$ 179,180.93	\$ 181,221.63	\$ 184,096.49	175%
<b>III. Anticipated Expenses</b>							
	A. Equipment repair/maintenance	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 566.49	\$ 4,959.99	\$ 5,033.59	\$ 5,124.63	513%
	B. Harvest Fest	\$ 250.00			\$ 595.20	\$ 595.20	238%
	C. Priority Projects *	\$ 7,500.00					0%
	D. Incorporation and Affiliation						
	E. Administrative Costs	\$ 300.00	\$ 88.91	\$ 229.66	\$ 409.66	\$ 463.85	155%
	F. Incidentals	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 119.96	\$ 119.96	\$ 119.96	\$ 119.96	2%
	H. Purchases	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,928.68		\$ 2,468.52	\$ 2,468.52	3%
	I. Summer Events	\$ 4,000.00		\$ 1,928.68	\$ 3,283.00	\$ 3,283.00	1%
	J. Dedicated Funds						
	K. Stipends	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,500.00	92%
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$ 30,050.00	\$ 8,204.04	\$ 15,248.29	\$ 17,409.93	\$ 17,555.16	58%
<b>IV. ENDING BALANCE FWD</b>							
	<b>BALANCE FORWARD</b>	\$ 91,535.46	\$ 167,972.82	\$ 164,387.94	\$ 163,812.32	\$ 166,561.95	182%
	Working Budget	\$21,535.46	\$ 47,972.82	\$ 44,387.94	\$ 43,812.32	\$ 46,561.95	216%
	Dedicated Donations	\$70,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 120,000.00	171%
	check	\$91,535.46	\$ 167,972.82	\$ 164,387.94	\$ 163,812.32	\$ 166,561.95	182%

January 2026

The Buckner Homestead Heritage Foundation is a not-for-profit organization created specifically to support and preserve the Buckner Homestead and Orchard in Stehekin, Washington, and is registered as such with the State of Washington and the IRS (Tax ID #452913458)

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**web site: [bucknerhomestead.org](http://bucknerhomestead.org)**

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