

## Book features 10 of island's 'Special Places'

By JIM LARSEN  
News-Times editor

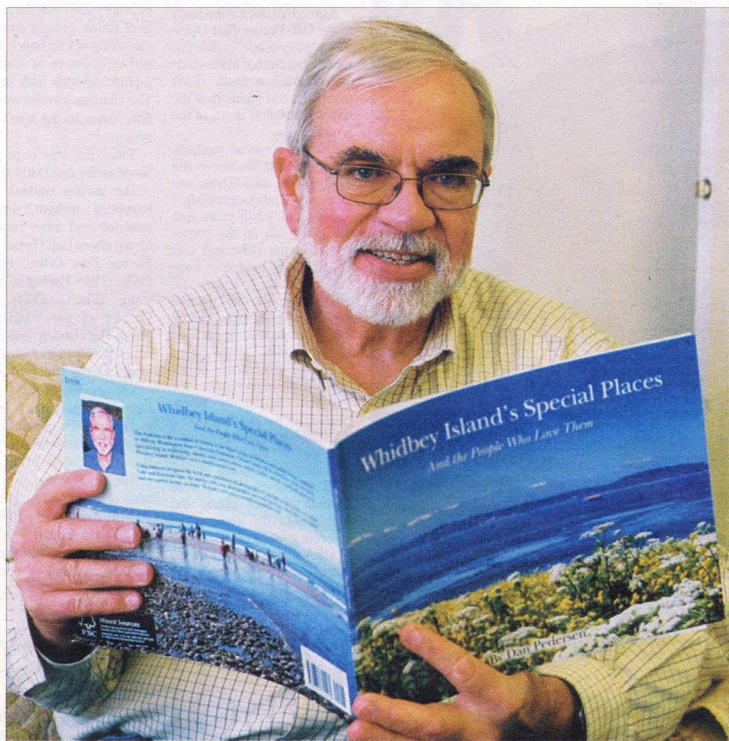
With the gloom of winter setting in soon, you can always find warmth and blue skies in the pages of a new book on the market, "Whidbey Island's Special Places... and the People Who Love Them," which is a labor of love by its author, Langley resident Dan Pedersen.

The author worked hard one recent Friday when the delivery truck brought 85-boxes full of books to his home. After stashing the heavy boxes, he went to work publicizing the books' availability, hoping to spread the word about Whidbey's magical places and, perhaps, offset some of the printing costs for the thin but handsome volume which offers breezy, informative stories and crisp color photographs about 10 special places on Whidbey and, as the title says, "the people who love them."

Flipping through the pages one is confronted by smiling faces, historical photos and an animal's lover trope of birds, whales, fish and even a coyote tip-toeing through a wetland.

"I don't think there's anything like it," Dan Pedersen said of his book. "It conveys what we all love about Whidbey Island... there is something that comes over people when they move here."

Pedersen moved here in 1986 and commuted for many years to his job in Seattle, where he was publications manager for Safeco. Upon retiring in 2002 he had even more time to enjoy his home, and got to know it bet-



Jim Larsen/Whidbey News-Times

Dan Pedersen peruses the pages of his new book, "Whidbey Island's Special Places ... and the People Who Love Them," now available in book store and online at [www.whidbeywriter.com](http://www.whidbeywriter.com).

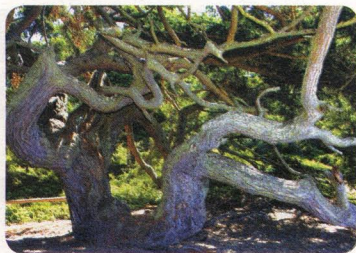


photo courtesy of Dan Pedersen

A gnarled, 860-year-old Douglas fir in the sands of West Beach is featured in Dan Pedersen's new book "Whidbey Island's Special Places." This is the oldest tree at Deception Pass State Park.

ter as publicist for the Island County Marine Resources Committee. In that capacity he met many of the island-loving characters in his book.

Through ten people, Pedersen tells the stories of 10 different places. The names are recognizable to many: Ranger Rick Blank at Deception Pass State

Park, Roger Sherman on Central Whidbey, and Elliott Menasche, an authority on South Whidbey State Park, for example. In simple feature stories he smoothly describes the places and the people who treasure them. It's an easy read, but surprisingly informative even for long-time islanders. You may not have known,

for example, that the oldest tree on the island, located in Deception Pass State Park, recently celebrated its 860th birthday.

Most of the beautiful photography is Pedersen's own, but for especially difficult subjects he had some help. Craig Johnson's birds at Crockett Lake and Veronica van Allworden's whales and underwater sea creatures in Langley are particularly impressive.

Pedersen hopes that by showing people the beauties of Whidbey, he can in this way help preserve them. "It's gently educational, not confrontational," he said. "Meant to encourage people to take care of this place."

The books were costly to produce, and Pedersen called the effort "a big leap of faith."

There should be a place on every shelf of local books for "Whidbey Island's Special Places." Even on a rainy

winter's day, you can enjoy blue skies, friendly people and scenery that is second to none.

### ABOUT THE BOOK

"Whidbey Island's Special Places ... And the People Who Love Them," by Dan Pedersen: 64 large, glossy pages, with pictures and stories. \$19.95, available at local book stores or at [www.whidbeywriter.com](http://www.whidbeywriter.com).



photo courtesy Dan Pedersen  
Ebey's Prairie is another site detailed in Pedersen's book. This is a photo of the Ferry House at Ebey's Landing, where early travelers waited for the boat to Port Townsend.