

THE VOLUNTEER

oice

Winter 2009



Nature
HISTORY
Discovery

Welcome to 2009 Message from Director Tim Wood

By Tim Wood, Director

During the holiday season and as each New Year comes upon us, we reflect on the past and prepare for the future. We assess what matters most to us on a personal and professional level.

I would like to express my appreciation for your generous giving of time, talent and resources. Your dedication and commitment continues to empower the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to provide outstanding customer service, maintain our parks to the highest of standards and vehemently advocate for our mission. We are honored to have the support of such an amazing cadre of volunteers and volunteer partners.

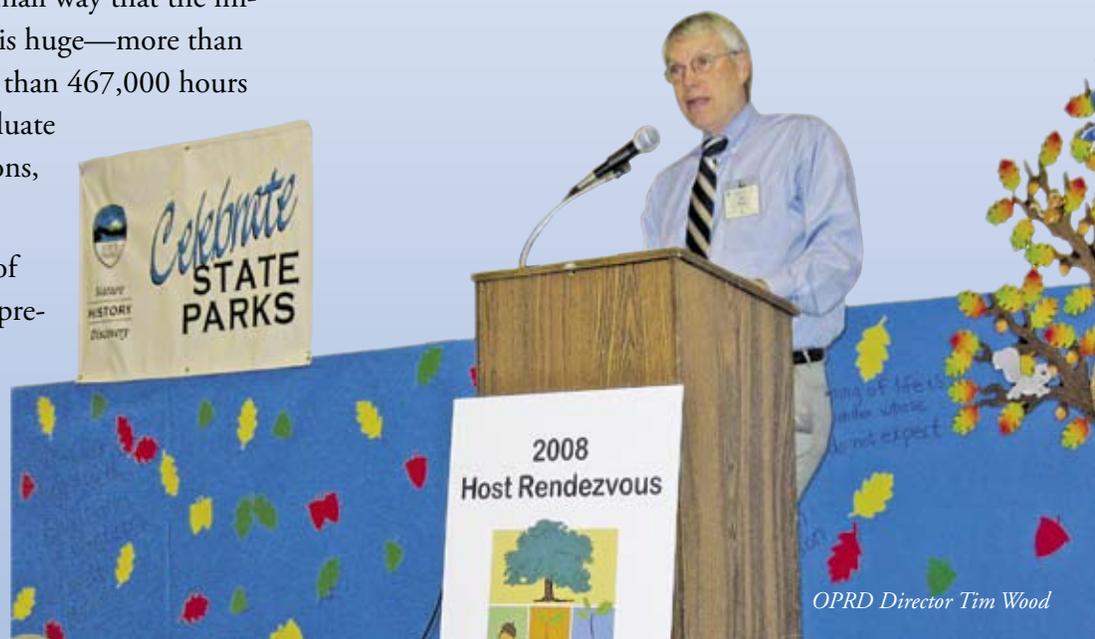
So what is in store for 2009 and beyond? At the close of 2008, the department held a Volunteer Summit (*see page 2*). Managers and volunteer representatives examined how we as an agency engage and interact with volunteers. We were reminded in no small way that the impact of volunteer service at OPRD is huge—more than 6,400 volunteers contributed more than 467,000 hours in 2007. When I step back and evaluate the significance of these contributions, I am humbled and grateful.

At the summit, I had the privilege of listening to a panel of volunteers representing various types of volunteer service. Their testimonies were motivating and underscored why volunteers are in a class of their own. Throughout the day,

managers, staff and volunteers engaged in thoughtful and high-level discussions about how we do work and how we acknowledge and improve upon our successes.

My goal is to create and foster volunteer opportunities that meet the personal needs of volunteers while enhancing the quality of services that our state parks provide. To meet this goal, I have asked Volunteer Services staff to define the direction of the program for the next five years via a strategic plan. The plan will be a road map for the volunteer program that will ensure that we move forward purposefully and are proactive in how we engage and partner with volunteers, our communities and our park guests.

We look forward to standing alongside all of you this coming year as we take steps to provide you with an outstanding volunteer experience. ●



OPRD Director Tim Wood

Volunteer Summit sets program direction

By Jill Nishball, Volunteer Program coordinator

A Volunteer Summit last fall brought OPRD managers and volunteer program leaders to Silver Falls State Park for a conversation about the agency's Volunteer Services. The full-day session looked at how we recruit and manage volunteers.

Our executive and field managers examined several topics, including:

- The role of volunteers in OPRD's mission;
- Our current and past volunteer management practices;
- Volunteer demographics and how they are changing;
- Volunteerism trends nationally and in Oregon;
- The implications of trends and demographics for current volunteer programs and future volunteer opportunities.

Discussions also centered on ways to change, expand and guide volunteer services statewide, and on understanding and responding to volunteers needs.

"Sometimes, providing a place where people can volunteer is more important than what we receive from them," said OPRD Director Tim Wood. "As staff, we need to keep that in mind when assessing their value as volunteers."

Tim shared his appreciation for volunteers supporting the department's operations. He noted that the department needs to set a direction for volunteer support and define the role volunteers play in the agency's mission.

"We need to develop some consistent procedures in the ways we view and interact with volunteers," he said.

"We also need to formalize our recognition of their value and importance."

Continued on page 10

Pilot project to evaluate pets in yurts and cabins

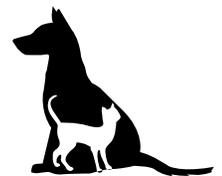
Selected yurts and cabins at LaPine, South Beach and Stub Stewart state parks will have a new breed of visitors this year. OPRD will allow people accompanied by their dogs and cats to reserve one designated yurt at South Beach, a cabin at Stub Stewart, and two cabins at LaPine. One of the LaPine cabins will be a deluxe cabin; the other a rustic model.

The decision to launch the pilot project came after an evaluation of 10,000 responses to an online survey and a survey of current state park reservation customers. For more information on the survey results, visit www.oregonstateparks.org.

"The surveys clearly show that pet owners want the option to bring their animals when they camp," said Chris Havel, a member of a task force overseeing the project. "Other people are worried that allowing pets inside yurts and cabins will erode our standards for cleanliness and well-kept facilities. We need to find out."

Although the surveys allowed people to express their opinions, the task force hopes the pilot will answer several questions. Will permitting pets:

- Enable new campers to experience an Oregon state park?
- Make it harder or more expensive to keep yurts and cabins clean and in good repair?
- Make some people feel less satisfied with yurts and cabins?



"We'll carefully monitor the wear and tear, cleaning costs and reactions of other visitors," Havel said. "Based on what we see, the final decision could be to keep the existing pet rule, or to open up a small number of yurts and cabins statewide to people with pets."

During the pilot, OPRD will charge an extra fee of \$10 per night. A limit of two pets will be in effect. "Pets" are defined as dogs or cats. ●

Program ANNOUNCEMENTS

Interpretive workshop draws international crowd

By Jamie Little, OPRD interpretive coordinator

The attendees at the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Workshop in Portland gave rave reviews to the event and to the spectacular scenery of Oregon's parks. More than 1,100 interpreters from the United States as well as Sweden, Malawi, France, China, Canada, Australia, Costa Rica, and Puerto Rico, attended the workshop Nov. 11-15, 2008.

The workshop was a great opportunity to impress potential interpretive rangers and interns with Oregon State Parks. OPRD staff built networks with their counterparts from other states and countries, and attended sessions that shared best practices and current trends in interpretation.

The workshop included more than 100 concurrent sessions, 13 off-site sessions, three pre-workshop courses, five evening special events and off-site trips to four state parks.

Jamie Little, OPRD interpretive coordinator and program chair for planning the workshop, led a session on interpretive management for interpretive coordinators. Heather Currey, interpretive ranger from Stub Stewart State Park, presented a session on Interpretive Program Toolkits. Kathy Schulz of California State Parks and one-time regional interpretive coordinator based at Oregon's Sunset Bay State Park, joined Heather in the presentation. Interpretive intern Anna Thomas reported on the nationwide survey she conducted on Junior Ranger programs and environmental education in state park systems.

Dozens of OPRD and Friends Groups' staff attended the workshop and helped plan and run the event, including Karen Houston, team leader from Tryon Creek State Natural Area; Heather Currey,

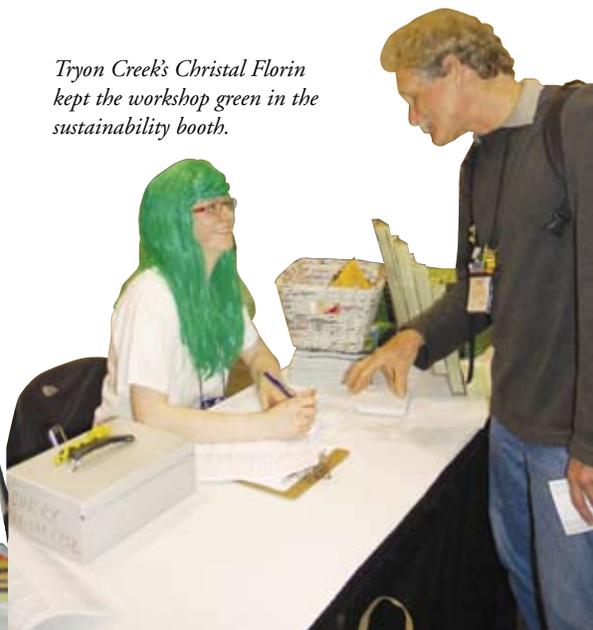
interpretive ranger from Stub Stewart State Park; Christal Florin, interpretive ranger from Tryon Creek State Natural Area; and interns Liz Travers, Sarah Dunham, Kristine Yamamoto and Anna Thomas. Kim Martin, Friends of Historic Champoeg, and Sheilagh Diez from the Friends of Tryon Creek, also helped.

OPRD staff that led tours included District Managers Kevin Price and Dennis Wiley, as well as Team Leaders Mike Niss (Champoeg) and Karen Houston (Tryon) and Interpretive Rangers Christal Florin and Shelley Parker from Tryon Creek and Nehalem Bay. The Friends of Vista House, Tryon Creek, and Historic Champoeg also helped with park tours. Jean Thompson and Jennifer McCormick from Salem created the OPRD booth display. (See related story page 4.) ●

Workshop participants Matt Huerter, Heather Currey, Greg Ryder and Nick Davis helped out at the auction table between sessions.



Tryon Creek's Christal Florin kept the workshop green in the sustainability booth.



Volunteer Services going online in 2009

By Tammy Baumann,
statewide Volunteer Services coordinator

So what happens behind the scenes in OPRD's volunteer management world? You probably aren't surprised to learn the biggest challenge in administering a volunteer program is the paperwork. You also know that there are a few pieces of paper that need to be completed, entered, tracked and reported for every volunteer that flows through our network. Until now, our data management software was redundant, inefficient and antiquated.

Volunteer Services is excited to announce a new volunteer extension to the HUB system. HUB is our internal, centralized database system that stores information about the agency's entire asset inventory—buildings, land and infrastructure. Beginning this spring, all volunteer data will be processed through HUB.

"The volunteer part of the HUB system makes the leap from managing information about assets to the complex challenge of managing information about people," said Doug Barton, OPRD application developer and project lead. "Volunteer Services has many similarities in its services and data needs, but there are also nuances that you have to expect and address when you create a system for personal information."

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South Beach boardwalk earns national interpretive award

The South Beach State Park team earned national recognition for the park's all-accessible interpretive boardwalk. The crew received the third-place Wayside Exhibit award at the Interpretive Media Competition Awards held during the National Association for Interpretation Workshop.

Visitor Services Team Leader Mike Rivers accepted the award on the crew's behalf. Rivers oversaw the interpretive part of the project. Park staff built the 272-foot-long boardwalk that allows visitors, including those with disabilities, to cross an area of foredunes to reach a beachside viewing platform. The boardwalk was primarily built with recycled plastic lumber under the leadership of Ranger Gary White.

Maintenance Team Leader Dave Weisenback and OPRD Planner Russ Richards developed the design. Stenciled messages are painted in a paved ¼-mile trail leading to the boardwalk from the campground. The shoreline's unique ecology is explained on display panels.

Signs along the trail mark the westward movement of the shoreline—a progression caused by the construction of the Yaquina Bay jetties. Carvings in a 30-foot-long railing at the viewpoint portray the wildlife that lives in the area.

The other two finalists were National Park Service entries: one from Glacier National Park and the other from the agency's Department of Environment and Heritage. ●



Mike Rivers (center) accepts a Wayside Exhibit award for the South Beach all-accessible interpretive boardwalk from NAI Director Tim Merriman and NAI President Jim Covell.

Safety Corner

Preparing for an emergency—natural and human-caused

By David Solomon and Amber Harper, *Safety and Risk Management*

Preparing for an emergency in today's environment means that we must consider human-made disasters—explosions, toxic releases and fires—as well as earthquakes, floods and windstorms. Knowing what to do during an emergency may make all of the difference when seconds count.



It's best to think first about the basics of survival: fresh water, food, shelter and warmth.

Build your emergency kit

- Water—a gallon per person per day for three days;
- Food—a three-day supply of non-perishable goods and a can opener;
- Flashlight and battery radio;
- First-aid kit;
- Towelettes and garbage bags with ties (for personal sanitation),
- Dust mask to help filter debris from the air.



Have a family plan of action

- Know which disasters are likely to occur in your area;
- Decide where you will meet (if possible);
- Establish how each of you will handle your different situations if separated;
- Determine how you will communicate,
- Set up a contact person out of the area who can help facilitate communication. During a local disaster, long-distance phone service may be available, even if local service isn't. You and other family may be able to call an aunt in Idaho, even if you can't reach each other across town.

For more information, contact your local chapter of the American Red Cross or visit www.redcross.org and select the Preparedness link. ●

Volunteer Services *Continued from page 4*

Benefits of the new system include:

- Verifies personal information but doesn't store personal information, which prevents a potential compromise of anyone's identity.
- Maintains a bulletin board of opportunities for all volunteers.
- Stores up-to-date records of volunteers' schedules and availability.
- Tracks volunteer activities and recognition.
- Supports the new iLearn (*see page 8*).
- Allows each park to search by skills, parks of interest, OPRD work history, and position preferences to match volunteers with opportunities.
- Gives park staff an overview of activities and events occurring in a park, management unit, district or region.
- Eliminates duplicate information.
- Serves as a digital warehouse for paper forms.

We are excited to improve our customer service for our volunteers and to use technology to do our jobs more efficiently. This system will fill in the gaps that exist in our current volunteer data management system. If you have questions, please call (503) 986-0751, or e-mail Tammy.Baumann@state.or.us. ●

Four parks offer new hosting options

Arizona Beach State Recreation Site



Location: 12 miles south of Port Orford, 14 miles north of Gold Beach.

Description: One host site with full hook-ups (50 amps).

Newly opened day-use park on the southern Oregon coast features a meeting hall, easy beach access and great tidepooling at the beach's southern end. Free fishing for kids 14 and under in a large pond stocked by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Common wildlife in the area includes elk, osprey and great blue heron.

Host duties: Greet park visitors, open and close gates, litter patrol, weed-eating and mowing in the spring and summer. Hosts also will stock restroom supplies and act as a visible representative of OPRD by providing day-time and evening security watch.

Contact: Cape Blanco Park Ranger Laura Rhodes, 541-332-6774, ext.4. www.oregonstateparks.org/park_258.php

Crissey Field State Recreation Site



Location: Seven miles south of Brookings Harbor, just north of the California border.

Description: Two host sites with full hook-ups (50 amps) in a fairly private setting in the heart of Oregon's banana belt. The host sites are a stone's throw from the Winchuck River that boasts "pretty darn good" salmon fishing.

Crissey Field Welcome Center sits tucked into the dunes with views of the ocean. The newly-constructed center and surrounding parkland is named for W.L. (Bill) Crissey, a Harbor lily bulb grower. The high-tech, "green" structure features furniture built in the 1930s by the WPA with local myrtlewood. The center is home to the U.S. Forest Service and the Oregon Travel Information Council.

Host duties: Provide a security presence during off-hours, opening and closing gates, restroom cleaning and light grounds maintenance.

Contact: Harris Beach Park Ranger Deane Roppe, 541-469-0224. www.oregonstateparks.org/park_74.php



Milo McIver State Park

Location: 45 minutes southeast of Portland and 3 miles west of Estacada.

Description: One host site has water and electric hook-ups but no sewer hook-up or land line phone. A cell phone is available upon request.

Milo McIver State Park has a new maintenance assignment to this popular Portland-area park. Many recreational opportunities center on the park's river access popular for fishing, rafting, kayaking and tubing. Seven miles of hiking and equestrian trails, a 36-hole streamside disc-golf course, and group picnic shelters are on the park property.

Host duties: Clean and maintain the boat ramp day-use area. Responsible for mowing, blowing, cleaning restrooms, litter patrol, opening and closing park gates and maintaining trails. Additional duties include public relations, handing out park literature and special maintenance projects. Possible year-round hosting opportunity.

Contact: Tryon Creek Park Ranger Karen Houston, 503-636-9886, ext. 222 www.oregonstateparks.org/park_142.php

Interpreting a coastal park

A different type of volunteer experience

By Grant Christensen, Jessie Honeyman State Park interpretive ranger

Honeyman State Park offers hosts many different ways to experience the park and interact with park guests. Last summer, park guests found their evening campfire program or interpretive hike led by a volunteer host.

In 2008, three couples with backgrounds in engineering, teaching and sales became the creative force behind the park's frontline interpretive experiences. Honeyman staff applauds the efforts of Dick and Carol Porier, Melanie and Don Ulliman, and Mimi Wong and Rich Partain.

They were the leaders of a walking history tour that highlighted the Lake Cleawox Historic District within the park and kayak expeditions on the lake that shared the area's natural history, geology and cultural history. Other members of the hosting trio operated a full-size nature center and store in the middle of our large campground.

The programs in the nature center combined education and crafts. Most impressive was the way they found relevant and teachable moments in almost all activities. Slug races, beaver dams from clay, spiders in a looking glass, treasure boxes for forest items, and collages that took shape in a child's mind attracted an average of 50 kids and their parents each day.

If you enjoy working with park visitors and want to enrich their overall park experience, consider becoming an interpretive host. You could be rewarded by the moment of discovery and awe that brings a smile to a child's face. ●



Melanie and Don Ulliman



Carol and Dick Porier

Hosting options *Continued from page 6*

North Santiam State Recreation Area

Location: East of Salem, midway between Mill City and Lyons along Oregon 22.

Description: Newly constructed host site features full hook-ups (50 amps).

A day-use area off the beaten path, this public but very private park setting is an ideal situation for hosts who prefer a quiet, secluded park close to the amenities in town. A long entrance leads down a hill into the park. The fast flowing North Santiam River is the main draw. The park features a boat launch, reservable picnic shelter, open green lawns,

forested riverside trail and a great swimming hole with a sandy beach.

Host duties: Greet park visitors, monitor picnic shelter reservations and clean and maintain grounds. The grounds maintenance duties are to pick up trash, check and stock restrooms, and cut brush and blow debris away from developed trails and parking lots.

Contact: Detroit Lake Park Ranger Jeannine White, 503-854-3406, ext. 23.

www.oregonstateparks.org/park_92.php ●

iLearn: The new way to train

Tired of tracking your safety training hours on paper? Soon, all OPRD safety training will be managed through iLearn, a new web-based training database. The new system replaces a clunky process that often ended in duplicated training or worse yet, no training. Requiring our volunteers to stay current on relevant training is one way we can keep safety front and center; iLearn will make the process easier.

“This is a significant step for the agency,” said OPRD Training Coordinator Chet Houser. “The system will help volunteers keep up to date on their safety training, with the added convenience of taking the training online via the Internet. Also, volunteers can take training prior to arriving at the park.”

In iLearn you enroll in the training module, read through it, and then enroll and take the module test. Other features include:

- A personal workplace with a calendar of your scheduled courses, transcript area that lists your completed training and announcements of new training requirements and opportunities;
- A learning center for accessing the course catalog, enrolling in a class and taking the test;
- A reference center with documents, surveys, FAQs, glossaries and training announcements, and
- A collaboration center for blogging.

Volunteers are not required to use iLearn to satisfy required safety training. You may still take safety training during your park host orientation or prior to participating in a volunteer event or project.

Although participation is voluntary, a step-by-step instruction sheet for creating a new account can be found at the OPRD website, www.oregon.gov/OPRD/VOL. Click on the iLearn New Account Set Up link



iLearn Safety Training Modules and Tests

- Lifting/Carrying
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- Hazard ID
- Lock-Out/Tag-Out
- Fire Extinguishers
- Ladders
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Occupational Noise/Hearing
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Waste Handling/Trash
- Facilities Cleaning
- Animal Awareness
- Vehicle Operation
- Gator/ATV Operation



under the Forms, Policies and Resources section. We recommend that volunteers take the iLearn tutorial before launching into a training module.

“Because we are still proofing the system, now is a great time for volunteers to create an account and explore,” Houser said. “If you have questions or problems, please let me know at Chet.Houser@state.or.us or call me at (503) 986-0781.” ●

Intel employees lend many hands to Stub Stewart trails

By Steve Kruger, Stub Stewart trails coordinator

Intel employees know how to make a difference. In honor of the company's 40th anniversary, Intel CEO and President Paul Otellini challenged the employees of this international company to donate one million hours of service. Employees at Intel's Beaverton campus chose Stub Stewart State Park to receive their "giving back to the community" hours.

Two groups kicked off the effort in June 2008. The first group of 15 volunteers spent six hours cutting, clearing and building up a trail section of Unfit Settlement View that leads to the highest point in the park. A second group of 20 people put the finishing touches on a rerouted section of the Hares Canyon Trail leading from the Clayhill Horse Staging Area. The two groups improved 200 yards of trail.

After a short summer break, a colossal volunteer event brought 91 volunteers to the park. Their tasks focused on finishing newly built sections of trail through the middle and northern part of the park. They worked on clearly defining the trail tread width and spreading a layer of gravel to bind with the clay soil. At the end of their six-hour workday, they had finished one mile of trail in total, and contributed 546 volunteer hours!

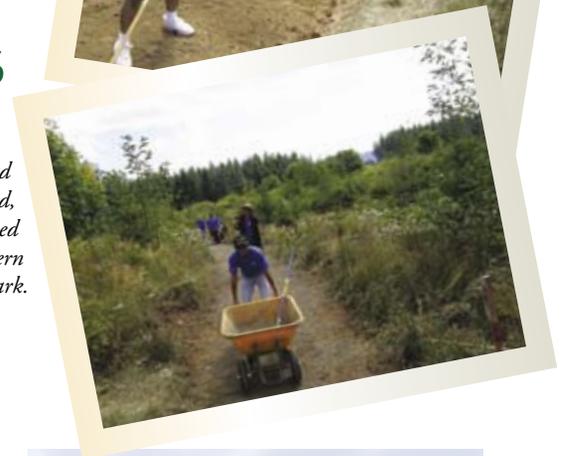
In late October, the original group of 15 returned. They wanted to continue the work they started on the upper sections of Unfit Settlement View. Another great day of hard work ended with the group completing approximately 50 yards of a tough upper section of trail.

Intel employees did more than just trail work. Another group of 14 volunteers in one short morning painted more than 30 signposts and signs for the trail system. In mid-December, a group of 50 volunteers planted more than 500 trees and shrubs in two camping loops, as part of the final landscaping project for the camping area.

Although the Intel volunteers have given hours of manual labor, park staff are talking with Intel employees who want to give in the areas of environmental education, photography documenting the early days of the park, and park events.

The Stub Stewart staff, the Friends of Stub Stewart State Park and Banks-Vernonia Rails to Trails and OPRD appreciate the hard work of Intel employees. ●

Pickaxes, rakes and wheelbarrows in hand, Intel employees improved trails in the northern portion of the park.



Friends to receive Intel employee matching grant

The trails, signs and landscaping at Stub Stewart State Park are looking good thanks to the hours of volunteer service from Intel employees and the benefit to the park is twofold.

As part of the company's one million hours of service campaign, Intel matches the employee hours by donating to nonprofit organizations or schools. This is great news for the Friends of Stub Stewart State Park and Banks-Vernonia Rails to Trails. Intel employees contributed more than 636 hours at Stub Stewart State Park and all of the hours will be credited to the Friends. During the first quarter of 2009, the Friends of Stub Stewart State Park and Banks-Vernonia Rails to Trails will receive a check for approximately \$6,000 in matching funds. ●

Cape Meares home to new Oregon Heritage Tree

The Octopus Tree at Cape Meares State Scenic Viewpoint joined the stalwart rank of Oregon Heritage Trees late last year. The Sitka spruce, or The Council Tree, as it was called by the Tillamook Indians, is well known for its odd shape and its history. Robert Reed and Alicia Knowlton of the Friends of Cape Meares Lighthouse researched and submitted the nomination to the Oregon Heritage Tree Committee.

Legend says the tree was used as a meeting spot for Tillamook tribal leaders and shaman. Another legend says that the tree's unusual limbs were shaped at a young age to hold canoes for burial purposes. Canoe burial was common in the Cape Meares area, but whether the Octopus Tree was used for this purpose is uncertain.



Photo by Robert Reed

A statewide dedication ceremony will be held May 2, 2009 at Champoeg State Heritage Area for all new Oregon Heritage Trees. ●



Summit *Continued from page 2*

Tim presented his vision for the volunteer program, which included:

- Expanding programs and services to the public;
- Maintaining a high level of customer service;
- Connecting people with parks and OPRD's mission, and valuing parks and their resources through meaningful volunteer experiences,
- Providing opportunities for citizens to make civic contributions and achieve self-fulfillment.

Several invited volunteers sat alongside OPRD staff. They shared their reasons for volunteering, what they receive from the experience and made recommendations for the future to park leaders. The volunteers included hosts Nancy Gerling, Larry and Judy Perkins, Friends of Historic Champoeg President

Greg Leo, Silver Falls volunteers and co-op members Lou and Andy Nelson, Silver Falls co-op staffer Carol Vanderwall, and Oregon Equestrian Trails group leader Joe Reeves.

Volunteer Services is developing a volunteer program policy and a strategic plan based on these contributions and recommendations. The policy will outline department expectations, state the value of volunteers, broaden the roles of volunteers and partners, and set forth how the department coordinates and supports volunteer services statewide. The five-year strategic plan will outline focus areas and include goals, actions and timelines for administering the volunteer program. The plan also will cover internal and external communications, recruitment, training, expanded volunteer opportunities, recognition and evaluation. ●

From THE MAILBOX

Hi

We stayed for two nights at Silver Falls Park, January 2-3. I just wanted to let you know how impressed we were with the camp host, Warren Springfield. We arrived late and it was icy, snowing and cold. He came down to meet us at the campsite and helped us get our fifth-wheel backed in even though it was 28 degrees outside and dark.

We typically stay at Oregon state parks at least two weekends a month all through the year and we have never had any camp host go out of their way to help us without even being asked.

We really appreciated it and thought you should know.

Thank you.

Colette & David Roth

Excerpt of a letter sent to the Friends of Silver Falls State Park by a local couple.

Please accept this check in the amount of \$500 to be used consistently with the constraints of the Oregon Cultural Trust.

I wanted your board to know that I had not intended to give to Friends of Silver Falls State Park this year, as I feel that I should spread some of the money to other worthy organizations, but I happened to be planning a hike down the inner part of the park and I had neglected to bring my walking stick. As I was bemoaning the fact that I had forgotten it, one of your lovely female volunteers offered me her stick, and I should just return it ... I was really impressed with this, and so you are getting another donation this year.

Do you have a question, comment or just want to share your experience as a volunteer?

Send your letter or e-mail to:

Tammy Baumann, Volunteer Coordinator
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
725 Summer St. N.E., Suite C
Salem, Oregon 97301

Tammy.Baumann@state.or.us

SAVE THE DATE

Sept. 18 - 21, 2009

2009 CO-OP CONFERENCE

IN THE BEAUTIFUL
COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE

FEATURING

The Friends of Vista House
Crown Point State Scenic Corridor

STAFF CONTACT

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503.986.0751 • Tammy.Baumann@state.or.us



Nature
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