

Jacksonville Woodlands Association

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Membership Renewed?

Ray Foster's Skills Continue to Aid Woodlands

Ray Foster has been a Jacksonville resident for more than 30 years and is one of the founding members of the Jacksonville Woodlands Association formed in 1989.

He is a retired high school art instructor, holding teaching degrees from Southern Oregon University and Portland State. In addition to being a JWA board member, Ray is a practicing artist and potter designing most of the Woodland's T-shirt graphics and crafting JWA mugs sold during the annual JWA Hike-A-Thon.

Ray recently built a pottery studio on a hillside that looks directly over much of the Woodlands trail systems. His pottery is sold throughout Southern Oregon, including at the annual Clayfolk Pottery Show held in Medford.



The JWA Board would like to thank the JWA partners: City of Jacksonville, Bureau of Land Management and the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy, whose active support and ongoing contributions play a vital role in the Jacksonville Woodlands success. And, thank you to the JWA membership and Jacksonville community for the generous financial contributions which provide the financial resources to sustain the Jacksonville Woodlands.

The Woodlands

Preserving the Natural & Cultural History of Jacksonville, Oregon

Newsletter of the Jacksonville Woodlands Association

Fall 2018

Timing and Enthusiasm Keys to Woodlands

The trees, wildflowers, squirrels and birds were all there in 1989. What was missing, though, was protection from urban development. In his Hike-A-Thon talk “Gold Mines to Woodlands Trails”, JWA executive director Larry Smith tells the story of how that all changed.

Smith's slideshow, originally developed for the Jackson County Library's “Windows in Time” series, uses maps, old photographs, archived newspaper articles and a lively presentation to explain how the Woodlands as we now know it came about. Sixteen miles of trails now wind through forest, along creeks, and past former gold mining sites. Over the years volunteers, including many of



Smith's 5th grade students, managed to bring in 21 properties for protection.

Besides the hard work and enthusiasm from his students, and the dedication of other volunteers, Smith admits that timing had a lot to do with it. “I don't think it could be done today,” he says.

Dedicating Panorama Point (the Knoll, Burkhalter, et al)



To watch the talk, click on the link on the website, jvwoodlands.com, Events>Hike-A-Thon. For more on the 2018 Hike-A-Thon, see pps 4-5.



Hike-A-Thon Takes a Break

For the past 25 years, on a weekend in April, new and frequent visitors to the Jacksonville Woodlands have laced-up their walking shoes and hit the trails in celebration of an amazing community resource—The Jacksonville Woodlands. Over this time period, the JWA members and Jacksonville Community were introduced to new land acquisitions, newly constructed trails, and historic panels, along with key community members and volunteers contributing to this successful effort. For 2019, the JWA Board will take a breather from holding this event while it undergoes review of the past 25-year success and prepares for the next 25 years. The JWA Board extends its appreciation and gratitude of all of the JWA membership, volunteers and business sponsors for making the Hike-a-thon a community success, and to Larry Smith, JWA past President and current Executive Director, for coordinating the Hike-A-Thon each year. --Charles Wilson, JWA President

Arboretum Offers Shelter, Views and Work Opportunities

2018 has been a busy year for the Beekman Arboretum and Friends of the Arboretum. Starting in January a beautiful new shelter was constructed, with funding and labor generously provided by the Jacksonville Woodlands Association, the Jacksonville Boosters and the City of Jacksonville. From the shelter's location at the top of the waterfall the view of the Arboretum and nearby Jacksonville is panoramic and has been enhanced by placement of additional large boulders and native plants. The ADA accessible picnic table and additional benches under the shelter provide a place to enjoy this view and are frequently being used for children's group activities, meetings and individuals' quiet times.

Work sessions at the Arboretum have become even more of a social event with the shelter and seating providing a place to rest, visit and enjoy a cup of coffee or water. It has also been noted that with this increased social time more doughnuts are being consumed by our deserving workers -- just more proof that the Arboretum really is being used and appreciated.

Speaking of appreciation, the many volunteers with varied talents are also appreciated for their willingness to weed, prune, plant, spread bark and decomposed granite, repair the aging irrigation system again and again and more. In addition, the aged, unsteady bridge which spanned the creek bed was removed this summer and the next day replaced with a sturdy, attractive one with such skill that it was completed in time for lunch.

Looking ahead, plant identification signs are being created to fulfill Alan Horobin's assertion that "In order to be an arboretum, plants must be identified and labeled." There will be more workdays to keep the area in shape and perhaps even an upgraded irrigation system in the future. If you are interested in volunteering and becoming a "Friend of the Arboretum", please contact Kandee McClain at mnkmcclain@gmail.com



Popular Trail Revitalized With Scout's Project



Walkers who have found the erosion problems on the Sarah Zigler Trail a bit challenging can now walk the trail without those worries.

Last June, Boy Scout Sam Marshal, from Troop 160, completed his Eagle Scout project on the Sarah Zigler Trail by installing two creek-side retaining walls plus completing several other trail improvements. The Zigler Trail suffers from bank erosion in several places that are narrowing the trail. Sam's project was crucial in saving the walkability of the trail. Troop 160 is sponsored by the Medford 4th Ward out of the Central Point Stake of the LDS Church.

Sam's Eagle Scout project is the 17th Eagle project completed in the Woodlands over the past 22 years. There are still several more projects that would qualify for Eagle status should any one out there be looking for one.

Bridges Get Needed Overhauls



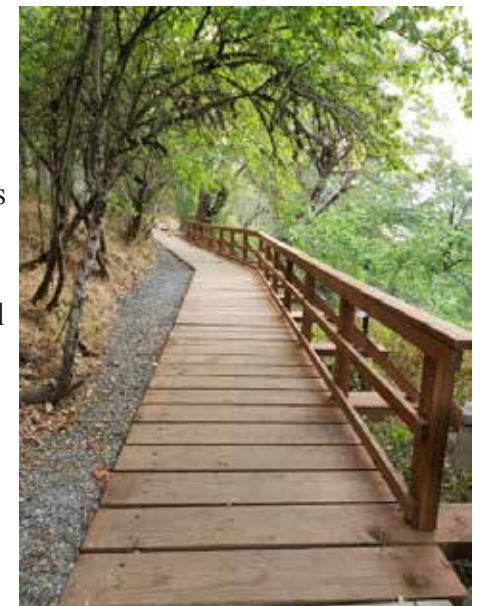
Volunteers included Bob Budesa, Tony Hess, TJ Murphy, Clayton Gillette, and Gary Sprague.

Thanks to hard work from volunteers and the cooperation of various organizations, the Woodlands now has two beautiful new wooden bridges. One is the long wooden walkway at the beginning of the Sarah Zigler Trail. The other is the short bridge at the C. C. Beekman Arboretum.

The wooden walkway connects the Sarah Zigler Trail at the Peter Britt Gardens trailhead. Former JWA board member and Forest Park volunteer Tony Hess coordinated the project, a collaborative effort between the Jacksonville Woodlands Association, Jacksonville Boosters Foundation, and the City of Jacksonville. Jacksonville City Parks' Coordinator Rick Shields and Parks' staff Eric Villarreal provided project supervision and oversight as a city construction project. The Boosters Foundation provides management and maintenance activities for the Peter Britt Gardens under

contract with the city. The Boosters agreed to co-sponsor the new walkway-bridge replacement with the JWA by providing \$2,500 in matching funds. The project was completed this spring.

Meanwhile, on a smaller scale, work was also underway to replace the small bridge at the C.C. Beekman Arboretum. That project involved Beekman Arboretum Friends and Forest Park Volunteers. This wasn't the first bridge the Forest Park volunteers have helped with in the Woodlands.



The JWA would also like to acknowledge the Forest Park Volunteer crew members who helped to replace the bridge over Jackson Creek at the terminus of the Sarah Zigler Trail.

GoodBean Has Been Warming Hikers for Years



Maintaining the Jacksonville Woodlands requires help from community residents, local organizations and business sponsors.

This year, the JWA would like to acknowledge Michael and Mary Kell along with the staff of the GoodBean Coffee Company. The GoodBean has provided coffee for the past 23 annual JWA Hike-A-Thon events, each time serving upwards of 100 Hike-A-Thon participants and volunteers. The GoodBean has also served as the unofficial meeting place where JWA programs, projects, and activities have been developed.

The JWA strongly supports local businesses providing local products and services to sustain Jacksonville residents and its environs.

Forest Park Trail System Continues to Grow

The Forest Park trails have seen much growth and improvement in the last few years. Collaborative efforts between the Forest Park Volunteers and Woodlands Association have truly made Jacksonville the Hiking Capital of Southern Oregon.

Early Forest Park trails were generally abandoned logging roads, mining ditches, and motorcycle tracks from the days before the land swap with MRA (Motorcycle Riders' Association). Until just a few years ago, folks had used these features to create trails on old logging roads (Jackson Ridge, Arrowhead Pass, Jackson Creek, Norling, and Twin Peaks Trails), the Historic Bullis Rail grade (Rail Trail), and mining ditches (Ol' Miners' and Boulder Trails). A running and motorcycle trail from the 70's and 80's along Upper Reservoir Road became Granite Trail. When money became available through donations (Naversen Family Trail) and grants (Ridgeview, Jackson Ridge, Canyon Falls, Canyon Vista, Halls of Manzanita, Ponderosa Snag, and Cantrall), more trails were added.



Then some connector trails were envisioned to allow visitors to make loop hikes throughout the park and to provide scenic views and access to park features. With input from the Public Works Department, two trails along creeks were developed by the Forest Park Volunteers to enhance summer hiking experiences: Shade Creek Trail along Norling Gulch and an extension of Jackson Creek Trail to the western park boundary where it joined Jackson Ridge Trail. Atsahu Trail was built along the southern and western boundary to allow loops in that area and Halls of Manzanita was extended to bring park visitors back to a parking area.

Continuing this 'spider web' trail system sent the volunteers along deer trails that connected old logging spur roads. A 3,000-foot elevation contour loop was completed by adding Claimjumper and Sofie's Trails and a 'hop over the ridge' challenge connected logging skid roads on Legburner Trail. Grotto, Pipsissewa, and Siskiyou Trails completed this upper loop of the park, picking up pieces of old skid roads, motorcycle tracks, and logging roads. To complete the 2,600-foot elevation contour loop of the park, Owl Hoot (on another old mining ditch) and Steep Canyon Rangers' Trails were added.

Where trails were closed to mountain bikes, parallel trails were constructed. Pieces were also added near roads to allow folks to stay out of traffic when using the park. Maps are posted at trailheads and many junctions.

Additional infrastructure has been added for visitors. Forest Park boasts 11 bridges, seven with railings. Many were built with recycled materials from bridge projects in the Woodlands. There are also about 30 benches, located at vista points and along shady creek bottoms, on which to rest and be in the moment. Three shelters have been constructed for respite from harsh weather at additional viewpoints.

In the coming years, a few additional short connectors will be added to provide improved flow for visitors throughout the park. Eventually the East Applegate Trail will come into the park from BLM land, allowing folks to hike clear to Ashland on the Jack-Ash Trail. This is a vision worth pursuing.



Gold Mines Become Outdoor Classrooms

In November of 2016, Oregon voters passed Ballot Measure 99, authorizing funds from the state lottery to provide all fifth- and sixth-grade students in Oregon access to a week of Outdoor School.

Every Oregon student in fifth or sixth grade, including home schoolers and charter school students, now have an opportunity to attend a week-long Outdoor School program, or an equivalent outdoor education experience that reflects their local community.



Jacksonville's historic district and surrounding woodlands trails and well-preserved gold mines offer a unique outdoor school opportunity for Jackson County Schools. Instead of being glued to a digital screen, students have the opportunity to explore historic gold mines, spring wildflowers, native trees, our pioneer cemetery, and the 1000-acre Forest Park located only one mile west of town. Forest Park with its 35 miles of hiking trails and wetlands offers students real-world natural science projects, nurturing a lifelong connection to the land.

This past school-year 19 teachers, representing nine Jackson County schools, took advantage of the learning opportunities that Jacksonville has to offer. Using both the Woodlands Trails and Forest Park, over 600 students and adults spent time learning about our natural world.

A typical Jacksonville visit starts at Bigham Knoll/the Old School where students learn what institutions were required to be established in order for a town to thrive in the midst of a wilderness. They then move on to view the historic churches that surround the historic Courthouse.

Backyard mining during the Great Depression might be discussed as the classes march through town on their way up to the Britt Gardens and a stop for lunch.

Hitting the Zigler Trail brings on an opportunity for tree and wildflower studies. The latter part of the afternoon is then spent hiking out to the gold mines and glory holes of Rich Gulch.

After hiking for six to eight miles the classes are brought back to their buses by 2 p.m. Some are tired, but many are raring to go again!

A new program starting this year uses a round robin approach. Three sixth grade classrooms spend one day each rotating through the Woodlands and then two days out studying and completing community service projects in Forest Park.

With Lottery money now available to provide for staff and buses, Jacksonville's natural and historic heritage is poised to continue to open up the world to many more students in the years to come.

Be ready for an invasion of the yellow school buses!



Hike-A-Thon 2018 Makes and Illuminates History

When hikers and history buffs gathered on a beautiful April day this year for the annual Hike-A-Thon, they made history. This was the first official use of the new Jacksonville Community Center, Cedars on 4th. The over-whelming reaction upon entering the beautiful Great Room was “wow”. Jeanena Whitewilson, a JWA member and one of the leaders in building the new community center, handled the many tour requests before the official proceedings and the slide show by Executive Director Larry Smith. This one may also be historic because it may be the last Hike-A-Thon, at least for awhile. (See p. 1)



Below: After the presentation, Smith moved the history talk outside, leading hikers on the Woodlands’ trails and pointing out some of the parcels he’d been describing.



Left: Becca Kem led a stroller-friendly walk to the Arboretum, and the rest of the hikers stopped there as well near the end of the hike. *Left below:* During the presentation Becca kept the little ones occupied with engaging crafts. *Below:* After the hikes, both groups made their way to Doc Griffen Park to partake of lunch, generously provided by Jacque and Jason Williams of the **Jacksonville Chiropractic Clinic**. Morning coffee was provided by **GoodBean Coffee**, and cookies and other baked goods came from the Mustard Seed Cafe and Forty-Five Coffee. For more 2018 Hike-A-Thon photos, visit our Archives at jvwoodlands.com>Media Gallery>Photo Archive.



Far left: Joan Long was the oldest person to participate in the hike, and three-week old Henry Brodie was the youngest.



Left: Jeanena Whitewilson played a key role in the completion of the new Jacksonville community center, Cedars on 4th. Charley Wilson is currently president of the Jacksonville Woodlands Association. It is his planning and hard work that makes the Hike-A-Thon a successful event each year, say board members.