



Park projects updates

BY JANIS MOHR-TIPTON

Many of you have asked about the Jackson County Parks Parking Permit. It's time to be thinking about it because Annual Parking Permits are available now for \$30 and are valid January through December. You can save \$5, though, if you purchase an annual permit in December for \$25. Partial year permits are not an option.

The parking permit is good for all 35 parks in the county and includes all passengers in a permitted vehicle.

Permits can be purchased locally at Ruch Country Store and at many locations in Medford and Central Point. For more information, call the Jackson County Parks office at 541-774-8183 or visit jacksoncounty.org/parks/General/Permits/Annual-Parking-Permit.

Park enhancements updates

Solar Education Project. A team of volunteers from the Park Enhancement Committee (PEC) has been working with landscape contractor Francisco Contreras to construct a large sundial and insert the artistic components made by local artist Jeremy Criswell. This project was supported by generous grants from the Carpenter Foundation, The Oregon Community Foundation, and private donors.

The sundial is located next to the 55-panel Solar Array that was completed in September by True South-SunPower Elite and Jackson County Parks through a Blue Sky Grant. You can see the array to your left soon after you enter the park, up on a terrace near the Vegetative Submersible Bed. By the end of 2018,

the entire display area and groundwork will be completed and ready for use by school groups and other visitors.

New pollinator plantings. In several areas of the park, you will see some new landscaping with a focus on native, pollinator, and drought-tolerant plant varieties. Drought conditions have been very hard on the plants and shrubs and even our large trees within the park, as well as our local region. We have been removing invasive species and pruning dead branches in preparation for replanting in the park when there is enough moisture.

So you will see gradual changes throughout the rest of fall and into winter as conditions get better for transplant success. The first rains were a start, but we need more moisture in the soil to keep the transplanted roots from dehydrating.

Students from local schools, community volunteers, and local groups help out a lot. If you are interested in being involved, please contact me. If you have expressed an interest on a survey or sign-up sheet, we will be contacting you when the conditions are right—so think rain!

Sculpture Art in the Park. Cheryl D. Garcia, our local sculpture artist, is hard at work on the first sculpture, which will be installed in the lower area of the park near the children's playscape toward the end of the year. It will be a wonderful greeting to a new year with the beautiful white blossoms of the 12-foot high Mock Orange sculpture.

To all of the wonderful park volunteers, thank you for the help you have provided this year with various projects in the park. As a community, we are committed to taking care of our park and the natural resources around us. There is so much passion and caring, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to work side by side with each of you. I get many compliments from Jackson County Parks staff, who think this is an outstanding park because of community involvement. Give yourselves a pat on the back, and accept a tremendous thanks from all of the PEC members.

Happy holidays to all, and see you in the park!

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Contractor Francisco Contreras lays the sundial pavers, while his employee Jose assists.



The raw steel Mock Orange blossom sculpture being created by metal sculptor Cheryl Garcia will be painted before it's installed in the park.

Friends of Cantrall Buckley Park at work again

BY CATHY RODGERS



Friends of Cantrall Buckley Park gathered on a beautiful fall morning on September 29 for its third in a series of SOLVE (Stop Oregon Littering and Vandalism) riverside cleanup activities. Coordinated by A Greater Applegate's (AGA) Park Enhancement Committee, 24 volunteers spent the morning pruning invasive blackberry vines, trimming dead and broken branches, removing invasive species, and picking up litter. The project was organized to help protect native plantings along the Applegate River and maintain the natural beauty of the park for all those who come to enjoy this jewel in the Applegate.

SOLVE is a statewide nonprofit organization, founded in 1969 by then Governor Tom McCall, that helps clean up litter and reduce the effects of vandalism. The organization coordinates activities each year that mobilize 30,000 volunteers across 1,000 different projects throughout Oregon.

Since its inception SOLVE has expanded to concentrate on environmental stewardship projects focused on cleaning up, protecting, and preserving the state's natural spaces, parks, beaches, and rivers. SOLVE activities include litter removal, native tree and shrub planting, and invasive species removal—activities that compliment many of the projects currently under way in Cantrall Buckley Park.

The cadre of Applegate Valley volunteers (under the leadership of Janis Mohr-Tipton, chair of the AGA's Cantrall Buckley Park Enhancement Committee) represented three different nonprofit organizations, including A Greater Applegate, the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council, and Rooted in Hope.

There were four mother-daughter teams, one three-generation team, and a father-son duo. The age of volunteers spanned from 4 to 75 years young. All volunteers showed up with energy and enthusiasm to donate a couple of hours of their morning to help protect and preserve the local park that we all enjoy so much.

Volunteers were assembled into four teams, provided with work gloves, clippers, rakes, shovels, buckets, and garbage bags, and assigned a designated cleanup zone. Educational information and posters were on hand, along with local environmental experts to help ensure everyone could recognize an invasive species for removal and native species for protection. An information briefing at the start ensured that everyone learned something new and met "new friends" of the park. About 12 cubic feet of invasive species, a garbage-can full of litter, and a healthy pile of dead limbs were all assembled for Jackson County Parks to remove.

The day's successful cleanup was finished with a wonderful tour of the recently completed solar installation, as well as the future solar education and sundial site. Additional events are being planned for students from our local schools that will help to prepare and plant native species and pollinator species to restore natural habitat inside the park entrance and around the playground and restroom area, where invasive species have crowded out the original habitat.

AGA's Park Enhancement Committee is always looking for volunteers to help with the park and student events. For more information, contact AGA Park Enhancement Committee chair, Janis Mohr-Tipton, at 541-846-7501.

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Top photo: Volunteers at the Cantrall Buckley Park SOLVE cleanup project stand behind the pile of invasive blackberry vines that were removed. From left to right: Katie Emick, Sonia Prisciach, Tommy Prisciach, Tom Prisciach, Cathy Rodgers, Tom Klein, Katrina, Barb Mumblo, Janis Mohr-Tipton, Hadley Dunlevy, Janelle Dunlevy, and Scott Willi. Bottom photo: Serafina, age 5, drew a picture of the volunteers collecting litter and showing how pretty the park is. Photos: Cathy Rodgers.