

Art and science come together in weekly after-school program



Cherise Kaechele, The Observer
Sixth-grade students get their hands dirty in May 2016 at Pete's Pond, the site of this fall's Discover After School Program that will combine science and art for middle schoolers.

By Lisa Lester Kelly
Go! Magazine

will use art and science to guide middle school students in discovering the stories of nature and themselves.

LA GRANDE — An outdoor after-school program this fall Discover After School — a

collaboration between Art Center East and the La Grande Parks and Recreation Department — runs Sept. 16 to Oct. 21, offering free weekly field trips to Riverside Park and Pete's Pond, where middle schoolers will choose activities such as sculpting, journaling and scientific explorations.

Participants in Discover After School will visit the neighborhood parks on Thursdays from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Parks and Rec will provide transportation to Riverside Park, and Pete's Pond is a 1-mile walk from La Grande Middle School. The site is subject to change due to inclement weather or the accessibility needs of the group. Youth may get dirty and/or get paint on

their clothes, and masks will be required.

Art Center East encourages middle schoolers to "sign up today and discover our own stories and nature's stories from new perspectives."

There is no charge to attend Discover After School. For full details and to register, go to www.artcentereast.org/calendar/discover-after-school-program, call ACE at 541-624-2800 or email info@artcentereast.org.

The following area businesses and organizations are supporting this program through donations of time and materials: Cook Memorial Library, Greater Oregon Stem Hub, Blue Mountains Conservancy and D&B Supply.

DISCOVER PETE'S POND

Pete's Pond is a 4.5-acre parcel of land, with a 1.5-acre wetland, on the southern edge of La Grande. It was acquired by the Blue Mountains Conservancy in 2015. According to the conservancy's website, the site "plays an integral role in our mission to protect open, natural lands from development and enhance wildlife habitat." Pete's Pond also provides educational opportunities for the community, including this fall's Discover After School program for middle school students. Learn more at www.bluemountainsconservancy.org/petes-pond.html.

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