

# Skyline Ridge Runner

January 2012

Skyline Ridge Neighbors

Vol. 24, No. 1

A Nonprofit Neighborhood Association Serving Northwestern Multnomah County, Oregon

## Bikes on Skyline: Neighborhood Meeting Attracts Large Crowd

By Laura Foster, McNamee Road

In November, over 140 bikers, drivers, law enforcement officials, bike community leaders and Skyline residents met at the Skyline Grange to talk about bikes and cars using the roads of the Skyline neighborhood.

The topic elicits strong opinions and memories of unpleasant interactions. It is the number one concern reported by Skyline residents on a 2010 road safety survey. To set a friendly tone for civil discourse, professional moderator and McNamee Road resident Stan Sitnick asked each person to turn to someone nearby whom they did not know and exchange a friendly greeting. The room swelled with conversation, laughs and a good buzz that persisted, for the most part, through the two-hour meeting, even as people began to stand, identify themselves, and share their frustrations and concerns.

At the front of the room, Mark J. Ginsberg, an attorney specializing in bike law, and Captain Monte Reiser of Multnomah County Sheriff's Office addressed questions and comments. Also at the meeting and at times contributing to the discussion were:

- Chuck Sparks, Multnomah County deputy district attorney
- Rod Underhill, Multnomah County chief district attorney
- Sergeant Tim Lichatowich, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
- Sergeant Brian White, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
- Jonathan Maus, reporter (who reported on the proceedings at [www.bikeportland.org](http://www.bikeportland.org))
- Kenji Sugahara, Oregon Bike Racing Association (OBRA) executive director

- Kevin Rhea, Portland Velo president
- Joanna Valencia, Multnomah County transportation planner
- Susan Peithman, Bicycle Transportation Alliance
- Troy Sexton, bike attorney
- Dave Levy, McNamee Road resident, bike racer and bike builder

- Andrew Holtz, member of the Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizens Advisory Committee, along with three others from this committee

- Robert Burney, with Multnomah Athletic Club's cycling committee

The neighborhood was well represented by many residents, including SRN president Cindy Banks and board members Kate Eskew, Natalie Harger, Karen Garber, Laurel Erhardt, Libby Merwin and Audrey Vasconcellos. Many attendees came from the

Forest Park Neighborhood Association including FPNA board members Peter Blood, Jerry Grossnickle, Les Blaize and Susan Andrews.

### Topics Raised and Addressed

At the start of the meeting, attendees were given a sheet that compiled concerns raised by residents after a solicitation in the October Ridge Runner. They included answers as provided at the meeting by law enforcement, experts and attorneys:

**1. Is it legal to pass a bike when double yellow lines are present?** Yes, when it is prudent and safe to do so.

**2. When passing a biker when double yellow lines are present, what are the legal consequences for a driver if a collision occurs with a car traveling in the opposite direction?** That depends on the circumstances: speed,

**Bike Meeting, p. 3 ►**

# *Skyline Ridge Runner*

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→ *Deadline for the next issue is March 15*

## **Skyline Ridge Neighbors Inc.**

Skyline Ridge Neighbors is a nonprofit organization serving rural northwestern Multnomah County through educational, environmental and social programs that inform residents on relevant issues and events. SRN endeavors to better our community, encourage volunteer efforts, and openly communicate with residents and outside organizations.

## **SRN Board of Directors (2011-2012)**

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## **Skyline Rural Watch Newsline**

Subscribe to SRN's weekly email newsletter of local events and news via the link at [www.snpdx.org](http://www.snpdx.org). Contact the Editor, Laurel Erhardt, at [newsline@snpdx.org](mailto:newsline@snpdx.org) or 503.621.3501 to submit items for publication

## **SRN Website**

Visit [www.snpdx.org](http://www.snpdx.org) for more news, photos and information about our community. Contact the Webmaster, Agnes Kwan, at [webmaster@snpdx.org](mailto:webmaster@snpdx.org).

The views and opinions presented herein are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by SRN or Skyline neighborhood residents.

*There's more online at*  
**[www.snpdx.org](http://www.snpdx.org)**

## **Treasurer's Report**

*By Karen Garber*

### **SRN Income & Expenses 10/1/2011 - 12/31/2011**

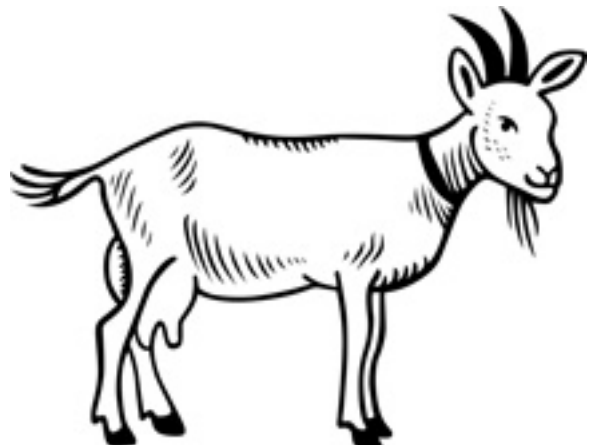
BEGINNING BALANCE	October 1	16,525
<b>INCOME</b>		
Advertising		130
Donations		100
Interest		26
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		
		256
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Hall Rental		75
Web Hosting & Domain Name		100
Ridge Runner		688
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		
		862
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENSE)</b>		(606)
ENDING BALANCE	DECEMBER 31	15,919

### **Thanks For Your Donations!**

Many thanks to the following neighbors and friends who made a cash donation to SRN between October 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011

~ Ken Prier

Donations are tax-deductible and always appreciated! Please send them to the SRN Treasurer at Skyline Ridge Neighbors, c/o Karen Garber, 16238 NW McNamee Rd, Portland, OR 97231



## ***Bike Meeting*** (continued from p.1)

road conditions, sight distance. Captain Reiser noted that if the driver is found at fault it could be criminal, civil, or an accident, depending on the circumstances.

**3. Must bikes pull off the roadway when traveling more slowly than the speed limit and are overtaken by a vehicle traveling at the speed limit?** Not if it is not practicable for them to do so, i.e., if the shoulder is steep, graveled, debris-filled or otherwise unsafe to directly pull onto with a car in close proximity. That basically covers most Skyline roads, which do not have paved shoulders.

**4. When if ever can bikers ride two, three, or four abreast?** Bikes can ride two abreast, but not if they are impeding traffic, which is a traffic violation. Captain Reiser noted that riding two to three abreast is okay if it's safe, but, he noted, it's not safe on Skyline roads. However, it is not an offense; the offense comes in impeding traffic when riding abreast.

**5. Drivers are frustrated both by the frequency of encountering bikers riding side-by-side and how slow bikers are to fall into single-file so they can be passed.** This was amply addressed; bikers agreed that standards of basic riding courtesy should be shared within their community. To that end, Kenji Sugahara of OBRA later provided SRN a proposed list of bike etiquette for racers to follow.

**6. Drivers do not like bikers to wave them along to pass.** It is up to the driver to make that decision, of course. Bikers feel they have a good view of advancing cars, and for them, it is a courtesy they are extending.

**7. Bikers are frustrated and endangered by drivers who pull ahead then slow down or turn right, forcing the biker to use evasive measures to avoid a crash.** There is no hierarchy of needs on our roads (except for emergency vehicles). Drivers should treat bikers as legitimate users, and drive accordingly.

**8. Both bikers and drivers blow through the stop sign at Germantown and Skyline.** There is that five percent of jerks everywhere: bikers and drivers. They do not represent the larger community.

**9. Some bikers and vehicle drivers have been noted as having an "I own the road" sense of entitlement. Who does own the road, i.e., who pays for road maintenance, and through which taxes or pools of funds?** Not just gas taxes, but money from property taxes, Oregon Highway Trust Fund (a pool from various sources) and other funds cover road maintenance. Susan Peithman of the Bike Transportation Alliance noted that over 95 percent of bikers own vehicles, meaning that they are paying the same taxes to support roads as those who own only cars.

**10. Bikers encounter driver behavior ranging from rude to menacing: gestures, yelling, prolonged honking,**

**tailgating.** See item 8.

**11. Is it okay to let a biker know you're behind, with a light beep of your horn?** One biker said he appreciated the head's up; others said no, it is startling and can cause a biker, especially an inexperienced one, to veer outward or crash.

**12. How far to the right should a biker ride?** When going the speed limit (as when descending a hill), a bike can use the entire lane, and needs to, for safety reasons. Otherwise, as far to the right as practicable, and this depends on the rider's skill and road conditions: the shoulder or side of the lane may be debris-strewn or slick with leaves and so a biker will be further out in the lane. It is "a subjective standard," attorney Ginsburg noted.

**13. "Skyline is not designed to be a recreational road" and "Bikers don't belong on these roads."** See item 7. Skyline was not designed for automobiles driving 55 mph either; it is an old farm road, and new uses require new adaptations.

## **What's Next?**

After the meeting, the SRN board agreed to create a transportation safety subcommittee. On December 4, the first meeting of the Skyline Road Safety Alliance took place. Along with Peter Blood, transportation chair of the FPNA, Skyline neighborhood members include Kate Eskew, Laura Foster, Sue Kenney, Libby Merwin, and Cindy Banks. Membership is open and more voices are welcome.

Attorney Ginsberg donated \$1,000 to the alliance's education efforts. Members of OBRA pledged to work with the community on enhancement projects (like SOLV) or roadside pruning. "We'd like to contribute to the area; it's a space we all love," said bike racer Brianna Walle.

Help has also been offered by a local engineer, Multnomah County transportation planners, members of the county's Bicycle and Citizens Pedestrian Advisory Committee and leaders in the bike community. Potential first steps include roadside education signage, lobbying for roadside improvements and formation of a "Friends of Skyline Roads" that would fund and work together to create a community around road users. Later, the Alliance will work on other road safety issues that have been identified by Skyline residents, such as excessive speeds by motorcyclists and lack of good turnouts for slow-moving vehicles (bikes, school buses).

Watch the Ridge Runner and the Newsline for specifics on the alliance's first steps and education campaign. The November meeting has led to strong partnership of various road users. Rod Underhill of the Multnomah County District Attorney's office, after acknowledging that as a rider, he has ridden two and three abreast, said, "We're listening. Some things we've heard tonight have gotten our attention."

**If you'd like to be part of the Skyline Road Safety Alliance, contact Kate Eskew at [kjleskew@gmail.com](mailto:kjleskew@gmail.com) or 971-678-3183. □**

## Skyline School Auction Donations Due February 8

Skyline School's "A Magic Auction" will take place on March 3, 2012 from 5:30 - 9:30 PM in the Skyline School Gymnasium. Admission is Free and appetizers are \$10. Please join us for Raffles, Fixed Price Merchandise, Silent and Live Auction. We hope to see you there!

Donations for the silent auction are welcomed. Please mail or drop your donation off at Skyline School. You can find donation forms online at <http://bit.ly/skyline-donation-form> or in print at Skyline School. For your auction item to be included in the catalog, we need your donation no later than February 8. Feel free to contact Natasha Jones at [skylineauction@gmail.com](mailto:skylineauction@gmail.com) with questions. Thank you for supporting our school!

## Skyline School Goes For Backyard Habitat Certification

*By Jinnet Powel, Skyline 4-H Stewards*

Skyline School just started the process to join the growing network of certified Backyard Habitat properties in Northwest Portland. The Backyard Habitat Certification Program (BHCP) will provide the educational backbone and continuity to make Skyline's Adopt-a-Plot Program a long-term success, helping the school community care for this special place so many call home. Skyline School strives to be a proactive steward of our surrounding ecological community: the birds, bugs, critters, plants, fungi, and bacteria that make our ecosystem a healthy and di-

verse place to live.

Being a good steward means learning about the resources and needs specific to our place. Habitats are special because they are not all identical. Living in Northwest Oregon is different from living in China, England, or Massachusetts; and that's a good thing. The Backyard Habitat Certification Program gives participants local-know-how: what to pull, what to plant and how to manage their yard to provide a welcoming place for our local wildlife. It's fun, it's educational, and it is a wonderful way to connect to your surrounding community.

We hope you will consider not only helping Skyline School become certified by either participating in our Adopt-a-Plot program or one of our Care Days, but in being a good steward of your own backyard. The Backyard Habitat Certification Program (BHCP) may be a good fit for helping you do just that. Visit <http://audubonportland.org/backyardwildlife/backyardhabitat> to learn more and sign up for the BHCP.

Join us on Jan 10, 2012: Skyline's PTA welcomes you to learn more about the Audubon Backyard Habitat Program at our January PTA meeting at Skyline School. Nikkie West, from the Audubon Society, will explain the Backyard Habitat Certification Program and its growing importance. Due to funding sources, the program is limited to City of Portland and Lake Oswego residences. However, you can always take advantage of their on-line educational resources. West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) provides assistance to property owners outside of the City of Portland boundary who wish to provide beneficial stewardship of their land. □

## Life on the Hill

## Scappoose Fire District Looking For Recruits

*By Chris Lake, Division Chief - Training*

Scappoose Fire District's "Holbrook Station" is looking for interested individuals to volunteer at that station. The station is significant in that it serves the north part of the Skyline Neighborhood area. We rely heavily on volunteers to provide fire protection and emergency medical services in our Fire District. Unfortunately, we currently have no volunteers serving at that station.

Some facts about the Holbrook Station:

- We have a fire station on Morgan Rd. It is part of the Scappoose Fire District
- It has been inactive for 10 years (no active volunteer personnel)
- This station has a fire engine and quick response vehicle
- It has basic emergency medical equip including oxygen and AED
- We need volunteers to service this community and fire station

- Becoming a volunteer will not only help the community but might also lower home insurance rates
- This station was called to over 60 alarms in 2010 and over 70 alarms in 2011
- We provide all equipment and training to become a EMT or firefighter. All we ask is for your time.

The deadline for applications is Jan. 13, 2012. Spring recruit academy starts Feb. 17, 2012. Pick up your application at the Scappoose Fire Station or online at [www.srfd.us](http://www.srfd.us).

## Child Care Openings at Linnton Community Center (LCC)

The LCC has a few openings in our full day state certified child care - open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Children spend between 8:30 am and noon becoming familiar with the Spanish language as they learn the preparatory skills needed to thrive at Skyline School. This is a combined Immersion preschool with one teacher who practices songs, fingerplays, speaks & reads stories in Spanish only. Call 503-286-4990 or cell phone 503-475-3731 or e-mail [abcuniversitypreschool@hotmail.com](mailto:abcuniversitypreschool@hotmail.com) to arrange a tour. □

## Vern Munson Has Witnessed Decades of Change on Skyline

By Sharon Barthmaier

Like many of the other landmarks on Skyline Ridge, Munson Hill was named after the family that homesteaded there. Vernon (Vern) Munson's grandfather, Amond, was a sailor from Bergen, Norway. Around 1868 he and his cousin jumped ship in Portland at the tender age of 17. He eventually got employment working at the old Imbrie homestead on Cornelius Pass Road where he remained for two years. Amond eventually purchased 180 acres on Skyline Blvd, now known as Munson Hill (west of Rock Creek Rd off Johnson/Beck Rd), for 75 cents an acre. The hill had been reduced to mostly stumps by this time. Amond Munson married Amanda Matilda Brooks and they had 13 children of whom 11 survived. Jim Munson, Vern's dad, one of the eleven, was born on Munson Hill.

### Pre-Skyline Years

Initially, Vern Munson, born in 1923 and now 88, lived on Germantown Rd. near the St. Johns Bridge approach. The property was fed by a spring which was a source of water for many neighbors. There was a sawmill at Rockton, which was located on current day Rock Creek Road, where Vern's father, Jim Munson, worked. Rockton, which had a station house in addition to the sawmill, was on Rock Creek Road before it was a road. Rock Creek Rd was originally a railroad line up the creek. Vern remembers horses pulling two-wheeled carts piled with lumber working at the mill. As a young child, Vern fondly recalls running about ¼ of a mile down to the field to meet his dad on his way home from work. The reward was a ride on the horse with his dad.

### Move to Munson Hill

A little known fact is that Munson Hill had the first community dance hall...before the Skyline Barn Dances. It was on Skyline in the center of Munson Hill. Amond Munson was known for his Norwegian Bear Dance which he performed until he died at 81 years.

Vern's family ultimately moved into a house on Munson Hill that had been built for his great grandmother Mary Jane Brooks (the widow of David Brooks). It was a community built house with lumber that had come from

the nearby mill. Vern remembers the house as "minimal."

Vern attended school at Munson Elementary as did his father, Jim. Jim was in the second grade when the school opened. Vern's grandfather, Amond, had initially given the land and some money toward the school. Vern remembers that the main part of Skyline Road formally stopped at the playground but actually continued through the playground to become a logging road to Mason Hill. Vern would ride with his brother Bill on horseback to school, and Bill would stable the horse in the old barn on his grandfather's property above the school. They would then walk down to class. Munson School had 23 students during its last years and Vern remembers being the only one at his grade level for 6 out of his 8 years there.



At home in Linnton, Oregon in 1949, Vernon and Lorna Munson show off their oldest daughter, Nancy. (Photo courtesy of Kelly Sue Munson)

### Origin of Skyline School

By the time Vern graduated from the 8th grade, Munson Elementary had consolidated with Brooks School and was renamed Skyline School. In those days Portland Schools would not transport kids from this area, but Multnomah County gave money to Columbia County for their transportation.

The bus went up Skyline and over to Mason Hill to pick up students. The Public Works Administration had built the roads traversing the hill in the 1930's. They had widened and graveled the road, but otherwise the area remained basically wilderness. These roads provided an interesting but bumpy ride.

### Childhood Years

His early years were simple times when young boys had bean shooters, rubber band guns whose ammunition was cut out of inner tubes, and steel fishing poles with the line running through the inside of the pole. This was also a time when neighbors told on you for stepping out of line. Groceries were bought in downtown Linnton, movies in St. Johns were 5 to 10 cents, and an ice cream was a nickel! The ice cream was bought at Densem's Pharmacy in Linnton, owned by Vern's future father-in-law, John Gurney Densem (JG).

**Vern Munson, p. 6 ➤**

By Sen Speroff and Tracy Waters

## Monthly Grange Meetings

Monthly Grange meetings are on the third Monday of most months, starting at 7:30 p.m. Also we have a work party on the first Saturday mornings of most months. This winter/spring we will dedicate the work parties to more invasive weed removal in our woods and the long-anticipated planting of native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers where once invasive plants had taken over. Some of the community's favorite Grange events are coming up.

We hope you will participate in these activities. Read about Grange doings on [www.srnpx.org](http://www.srnpx.org), click on "Grange". Email the Grange at [skylinegrange894@msn.com](mailto:skylinegrange894@msn.com). For rental information, contact Pat Barnard at 503-286-2857 or [pbarnard2@aol.com](mailto:pbarnard2@aol.com).

## Pancakes, Etc. Brunch 2/26

On Sunday, February 26 from 9:30-11:30 a.m., the Grange will be serving a hearty breakfast: the best pancakes (including Tracy's popular pumpkin pancakes), French toast, sausage, stratas, frittatas, fresh fruit, and breakfast breads. Mmmm. There is a suggested donation of \$5/adult or \$12/family. Bring the whole family and the neighbors.

## Spring Garage Sale 3/9-10

Why wait for spring to clean? You have a long winter to sort out all those items you don't really need, or like, or use. Before you throw it away or give to Goodwill, consider donating stuff to the Grange. The Grange will ac-

cept clean, functioning items, with a few exceptions. The Grange will not accept TVs, computers, kids' car seats, baby cribs, helmets, audio tapes, or large exercise equipment. Drop-off dates will be posted on the Newslines or you can email [skylinegrange894@msn.com](mailto:skylinegrange894@msn.com) or call Sen at 503-621-3331 to arrange a drop-off time. Deadline for donating is noon on Wednesday, March 7. The sale will be held on Friday-Saturday, March 9-10.

## Spring Tree & Native Plant Sale

Date has not been confirmed yet, but will be in April-May. Details will be posted on the Newslines and at [www.srnpx.org](http://www.srnpx.org). If you would like to receive a pre-order form for the native plant portion of the sale, contact [skylinegrange894@msn.com](mailto:skylinegrange894@msn.com). We plan to have a good variety of quality native plants, ornamental & fruit-bearing trees and shrubs, and we hope to procure some perennials and seedlings.

## New French Drain is Working

Hear ye, Hear ye: The monsoons have begun. The new drain has been tested. The front wall of the Skyline Grange building is, for the first time in 100 years, dry! Sending out giant gratitude to Isaac Ableidinger & his troop of Scouts & Dads, who worked together mid-summer to finesse a French drain along the driveway which has successfully diverted the rain water away from the structure! Thanks to EVERYONE involved. It's working like a champ (like an Eagle Scout?) & the Grange is grateful! ☐

## ► Vern Munson (continued from p.5)

The Munson farm on Munson Hill where Vern grew up was about 5 to 6 acres. His dad worked for Multnomah County. They had a few cows for milking and 3 to 4 calves. And as with all farmers, the older cows became steak. The Munsons usually butchered one cow a year. Vern remembers with pride that the meat market in Linnton felt that the Munson beef was especially tender. The secret: The Munson cattle had been allowed to graze on the school grounds.

Electricity came to the hill when Vern was in 7th or 8th grade (approximately 1936-37). It was definitely a community electrification project. The holes had to be dug, brush along the line had to be cleared and the timber for poles furnished by the residents, before the company would string the wires. Then the farmers had to agree to pay \$3 a month for 3 years to keep the lights on!

Summer work was picking strawberries for 22 cents a day. This was evidently not Vern's favorite occupation as he says he lasted only one day!

## From Adolescent to Adult

Vern Munson graduated from Scappoose High School,

where he went for 4 years, in a class of 41 students. He worked in the shipyards on Swan Island in 1943 and was eventually drafted. The draft caused him to give up an opportunity to wrestle under the tutelage of Gorgeous George (aka George Waggoner) who at the time wrestled in the Northwest but who eventually became a famous wrestler in the new media sensation, television.

Vern served in the Army Air Force in the 39th Photo Recon during WWII and was a mechanic for P38's. After the war, he returned to work in the shipyard and continued to buy ice cream at the Densem pharmacy. He eventually left the shipyards to go to college on the GI bill, getting a degree in biochemistry.

Remember the ice cream? Vern married Lorna Densem who was the dispenser of that ice cream. He claims that she never gave him his change from his transactions. However, he obviously didn't hold that against her and they were married June 20, 1947. Vern was a pharmacist for Fred Meyers, retiring after 25 years. The Munsons have three children. Nancy Hornshuh resides in Cannon Beach. Susan Still and her husband Gene and son Spencer continue the family residency in the Skyline area as does Jim Munson, his wife Kelly Sue and daughter Melissa. ☐

## The Rain is Coming...Is Your land Prepared?

By Carolyn Myers-Lindberg, WMSWCD

Erosion is the process that occurs when soil and other land matter are disturbed by either human activity or natural conditions such as extreme weather. When land erodes, it is carried from its original location into streams and rivers, where it disrupts spawning areas, pollutes water, and reduces flood channel capacity. In addition, the area where the soil came from will suffer from a lack of nutrients. Most eroded material is topsoil, which is necessary to sustain healthy plants. Once the topsoil is gone, it can take hundreds of years to re-form naturally. Common human causes of erosion include excessive tillage, poorly designed roads, inadequate drainage facilities, poor grading practices, no re-vegetation practices, and invasive plant species.

### How Do I Prevent Erosion?

Thankfully, there are several things you can do to prevent erosion on your property. Below is a short list of erosion control tips to help you get started.

#### Stream Bank Erosion

Preserve or plant trees, shrubs and ground cover in streamside areas. As winter rain falls, you may see stream levels rise significantly and suddenly. This can cause stream bank erosion, particularly in areas that do not have a good mix of native vegetation and of varying root depths to hold soil in place. Good vegetative cover along streams and throughout a watershed can lessen the severity of flooding by absorbing rain, slowing surface run-off and gradually releasing water from the soil and aquifer when streams and wildlife most need it.

When adding native vegetation to a bare streamside, include a mix of long-lived trees such as western red cedar, which will provide long-term bank stability and habitat structure, and species that grow faster such as alder and willows. Streamside plants also provide food and shelter for wildlife as well as filter pollutants in stormwater run-off.

Winter is a good time to plant riparian vegetation because you can find many species of small "bare root" trees and shrubs for less than a dollar each at wholesale native nurseries. Patches of bare soil can be seeded with native grasses, such as blue wild rye, to help hold the soil until the trees and shrubs establish. Planting native trees and shrubs up and down a creek, and keeping uplands wooded or re-forested, will go a long way toward stabilizing streams. Incorporate native plants into your landscaping plan for new development. Native plants require little or no watering or fertilizer and grow on difficult sites. If you're working around trees, just be careful not to damage the roots.

#### Covering Bare Land

Plant grass seed or other vegetation before the fall rains begin. Plant a grass/legume seed ground cover on all exposed areas and cut/fill slopes to create a vegetated buffer. Plant in fall, winter or early spring depending on the variety – make sure to check with the nursery providing vegetation for the best time to plant. On slopes greater than 20 percent use netting and straw mulch to hold the soil and prevent loss of grass seed while native plants are establishing. Straw mulch will provide erosion control and moisture conservation.

#### Woodland Erosion

In the rural woodlands of the West Hills, most of our erosion comes from roads and trails. Without proper drainage or surface materials, rainwater can erode gullies in our roads carrying sediment into streams and harming fish.

- Roads with an exposed soil surface WILL erode: these are the roads that get extremely muddy and are unpleasant to walk on during the winter. For roads that are used infrequently, consider planting grass on the surface to reduce erosion. If you drive on the road frequently, a more involved plan may be needed that could include laying special fabric on the roadway and covering with rock.
- Break up the flow of water on roads and trails: If you have a trail built on a slope, rainwater will flow down the length of the trail, forming a small ditch that can turn into a deep gully. It's important to break up the flow of water by adding cross drains or water bars. A water bar can be dug into the trail, and it will catch water and divert it off to the side where the water can be absorbed by trees and other vegetation.

Our rainy season is a great time of year to add some water bars to your trails or roads because the ground is so wet.

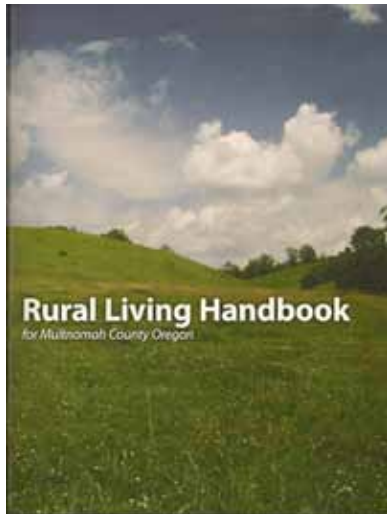
#### Invasive Plant Removal

Remove invasive plants and replace them with native species. Many streams in the tri-county area have been invaded by non-native invasive plants such as Armenian blackberry and English ivy. These plants have weak root systems that do not provide erosion control. They also out-compete native plants and disrupt our native ecosystems. Remove invasive plants and install native plants with varying root depths and densities for greater erosion control and wildlife habitat.

For more information and assistance, West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District is here to help, including free site visits, technical assistance, resources, and financial incentives. Please call 503.238.4775 or visit our website at [www.wmswcd.org](http://www.wmswcd.org). □

## Rural Living Handbook Now Available

By Carolyn Myers-Lindberg, WMSWCD



The Rural Living Handbook is now available to all residents of Multnomah County, including the incorporated areas. It contains useful information about the county, particularly about living in rural settings, such as buying rural property, living in and around agricultural land, and land use classifications. The handbook, created

by East and West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation Districts, is intended to be a management and conservation guide for those considering moving to or already living in rural parts of the county.

All the topics in the handbook address issues that rural residents deal with in their day-to-day lives as well as helpful tips on ways they can improve the health of their soil, water, woods and wetlands. Farmers can find out more about saving water through irrigation practices, improving the production of their cropland, keeping livestock and horses healthy with mud and manure management, and improving local water supplies through better drainage systems.

In addition, the handbook covers invasive weeds and how to remove them, planting native species and attracting

pollinators and other wildlife to their land. Forest owners can learn how to write and manage a stewardship plan for their woods and how to protect their homes and property from wildfires. The handbook also provides instructions on checking your septic and well systems for leaks as well as other maintenance tips.

The Rural Living Handbook is available from the West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District at 2701 NW Vaughn Street, Suite 450 in the Montgomery Park Building. It is also on the WMSWCD website at [www.wmswcd.org](http://www.wmswcd.org).

It's always a good booklet to have in your home. If you would like a copy sent to you, please call Carolyn Lindberg, at 503/238-4775, ext. 101.

## Woodland Management 101 Class Coming in February

By Amy Grotta, OSU Extension

For the third consecutive year, I will be teaching a winter shortcourse, Woodland Management 101. If you are new to owning or managing forested land, this is a great place to start learning about taking care of your property. We will cover a little bit of everything, from tree identification to tax issues, over the course of five evenings and one field session. View a flyer with all the details at [http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/sites/default/files/wm\\_101\\_2012\\_flyer.pdf](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/sites/default/files/wm_101_2012_flyer.pdf).

The course will be held on Wednesday evenings, Feb. 1st – 29th, 2012, at the Columbia County Extension office in St. Helens. There will be a Saturday field session Feb. 25.

Sign up by sending in the registration form (see the link above) or calling the Extension office, (503) 397-3462. □

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## Habitat Restoration Begins In the McCarthy Creek Watershed

By Carolyn Myers-Lindberg, WMSWCD

The McCarthy Creek Watershed Restoration Project began in November, 2011, with work to remove noxious and invasive species from this important waterway's riverbanks, plant the area with beneficial native plants and remove garbage at the site.

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) lists McCarthy Creek as "salmon and trout rearing and migration habitat." Small sections of undisturbed stream suggest that McCarthy Creek has the potential to be excellent salmon rearing habitat. McCarthy Creek is listed by Multnomah County as a "potentially significant water resource and wetland site" (January 1994) and the Bonneville Power Administration's Burlington Bottoms Mitigation Site cites the importance of McCarthy Creek restoration in its Five-Year Habitat Management Plan (2001).

The Native American Rehabilitation Association Northwest (NARA NW) property is near the mouth of McCarthy Creek and because it is so close to the highway, invasive weeds have been allowed to grow and spread. The site is less than a quarter of a mile away from the Burlington Bottoms mitigation site and less than half a mile from the Multnomah Channel, posing the risk of spreading noxious weeds into more sensitive habitats.

This project is funded by the Working Waterfront Coalition's recent "Industry & Art" event, which raises money to benefit job training and the environment. Working Waterfront Coalition (WWC), an organization of industrial marine businesses concerned about the environmental health and continued economic vitality of the Portland Harbor. Volunteers from WWC organizations, such as Gunderson Marine, will be working with WMSWCD staff on the invasive plant removal and subsequent native species planting.

## 2010-2011 WMSWCD Annual Report Now Available

By Carolyn Myers Lindberg, WMSWCD

Each year West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) produces an annual report detailing our work and accomplishments in the past fiscal year. This year there are some spectacular results:

- \$73,860 was awarded in grants to 22 local residents or groups for conservation projects
- 16,200 native plants were installed in West Multnomah rural setting
- 7,000 native plants were installed in West Multnomah urban settings
- 1,700 additional native plants installed on forest land

- 526 acres were surveyed for garlic mustard, spurge laurel, ivy, holly, and knotweed
- 74.6 acres were treated for garlic mustard, spurge laurel, ivy, holly and knotweed
- 335 lbs. of food harvested for area food banks
- 240 urban residents received technical assistance
- 236 students took field trips to Sauvie Island to learn about edible gardens/pollinators
- 109 educational hours were spent with children in school gardens
- 4 native/pollinator school gardens were planted
- 2 edible school gardens were planted
- 100 forest landowners educated
- 16,000 residents reached through outreach activities

The District's Annual Report is now available online at <http://www.wmswcd.org/resources>. We encourage local residents to read it and find out what we've been up to this past year and call us with any questions or comments. Most of our programs are free of charge to West Multnomah county residents and we'd love to work with them on conservation projects that improve their land, increase productivity and conserve vital resources.

## Fighting Invasive Weeds

In the invasive weed program, WMSWCD worked extensively against garlic mustard (from the West hills of Portland to the Riverview/Palatine watersheds), spurge laurel (in gardens and woodlands in the District) and knotweeds (in the McCarthy Creek watershed and along Balch and Miller Creeks). After two years of weed control on property owned by the Native American Rehabilitation Association Northwest, a demonstration project was finally planted with the help of NARA clients and staff. In addition, lots of garlic mustard, ivy, and holly were removed and native species planted in upper Balch Creek.

In the woods, WMSWCD worked with 9 landowners to complete or start Stewardship Plans covering 229 acres. Invasive weeds were removed and native species installed in the woods covering Portland's southwest hills.

Close to \$74,000 was awarded to organizations and private residents in FISH (Financial Incentives for Sustainable Habitat) grants for projects ranging from invasive weed removal to stream enhancements to manure composting.

## Healthy Streams

Large-scale streambank restoration projects were accomplished along Balch and Tryon Creeks and in the Fanno Creek watershed. WMSWCD also completed a neighborhood demonstration project at the Montgomery Park facility in Northwest Portland and launched a Portland Urban Meadowscape Pilot project with 20 landowners.

Out in the farming community, WMSWCD helped Abbey Creek Stables install a 1,700 cubic foot manure stor-

**WMSWCD Annual Report, p. 10**►

## ► WMSWCD (continued from p. 9)

age shed. Why is that important? It will prevent the leaching of contaminants from the manure pile into groundwater and into nearby creeks when it rains. The District also helped Malinowski Farms install two "heavy use areas" for livestock...again to get rid of the muddy quagmire around the barn during the rainy seasons and keep contaminants away from water sources.

During the District's Healthy Streams Program, technicians planted over 16,000 native species along McCarthy Creek and the Gilbert River on Sauvie Island. A lot of weeding went on at the Wapato State Access Area on Sauvie Island, where the District helped install two large interpretive signs for visitors on flora and fauna. WMSWCD sampled water for macroinvertebrates in 5 creeks on Sauvie Island, began mapping the island for Oregon White Oaks and ivy infestations.

## Partnering with Schools

Finally, our efforts in area elementary schools have been fun and rewarding! WMSWCD worked with four schools to plant edible and pollinator gardens, harvested 335 pounds of food for local food banks and paid to send 236 students on field trips to Sauvie Island Organics to learn about edible and pollinator gardens.

We've been busy this past year...and the numbers show it! Visit our website at [www.wmswcd.org](http://www.wmswcd.org) to learn more about our results and accomplishments!

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## Full Color Maps of Skyline Area for Sale

SRN offers a 34 x 44 inch color wall map made by Metro that shows an aerial photo of our boundaries in Multnomah Co., overlaid with street names, parcel outlines, creeks, etc. Price is \$23 each. Contact [srn@srxpdx.org](mailto:srn@srxpdx.org) or 503.621.9867.

## Intertwine Alliance

By Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor, District 1

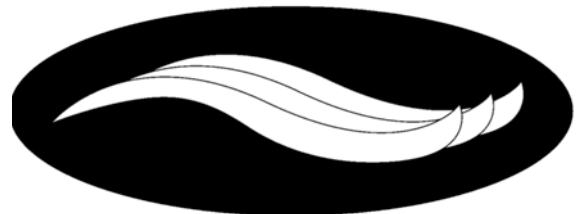
One of my roles as a Metro Councilor is to serve as a liaison to the Intertwine Alliance. What is the Intertwine, anyway? The Intertwine is our regional network of parks, trails and natural areas. Forest Park, Smith and Bybee Lakes, the East Buttes – they're all part of what we call the Intertwine. These open spaces are important to us all, as they provide us opportunities for recreation, keep our air and water clean, provide places for us and our children to explore nature, and help us stay healthy.

The Intertwine Alliance is a broad coalition of public, private and nonprofit partners who share a common goal of preserving, investing in and spreading the word about the Intertwine. We all know that acquiring, protecting, restoring, and maintaining these regional assets requires resources that, in this economy, are becoming harder and harder to come by. Working together beyond jurisdictional and geographic boundaries allows us to create efficiencies, leverage investments, and be more effective in reaching our common mission.

The Alliance is a non-profit corporation funded by coalition members, and I recently attended its first two board meetings. I look forward to working with the Alliance Board in the future to further efforts to support the treasured parks and open spaces that make this region such a great place to live.

Explore the Intertwine at <http://theintertwine.org/index.html>. □

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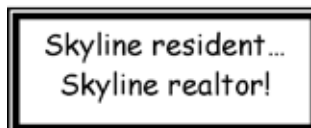
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**Open House at Wildwood Nature School.** Families are invited to visit our play-based preschool on Saturday, February 25 between 10 -2 to play, learn, meet the teachers, and tour the facility. Call or email Nicole Fravel (nfravel@wildwoodnatureschool.com or 408-656-6916) for directions and to RSVP.

**Free Mushroom Compost.** Shiitake mushroom blocks make great compost and some blocks will still produce. One full size pick-up load per week. For best compost, blocks need seasoning. Contact Mary 503-522-7379.

**Donate your vehicle,** running or not, to MIKE Program commemorating longtime SRN resident, Michael Hartnett. Detailed instructions at [www.mikeprogram.org/vehicle\\_donation](http://www.mikeprogram.org/vehicle_donation) to support health and mentoring enrichment for teens.

**Rent the Skyline Grange.** Planning an event? The Grange may be the perfect spot. Contact Pat Barnard at (503) 286-2857 or pbarnard2@aol.com. Visit [www.skyline-grange.org](http://www.skyline-grange.org) for info.

**Weed wrenches.** Eliminate Scotch broom, holly and other wood shrubs and sapling trees easily with a weed wrench. Borrow one free from SRN. Contact Sen at (503) 621-3331.

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## Community Calendar

**Jan. 10, 6 PM:** Skyline School PTA Meeting. Learn more about the Audubon Backyard Habitat Program at Skyline School. Nikkie West, from the Audubon Society, will explain the Backyard Habitat Certification Program.

**Jan. 12, 7 PM:** SRN Board of Directors regular monthly meeting, Brooks Hill church, 11539 NW Skyline Blvd.

**Feb. 1:** "Woodland Management 101." First meeting of 5 week course taught in St Helens by OSU Extension advisor Amy Grotta. If you are new to owning or managing forested land, this is a great place to start learning about taking care of your property. For more info, call the Extension office, (503) 397-3462.

**Feb. 9, 7 PM:** SRN Board of Directors regular monthly meeting, Brooks Hill church, 11539 NW Skyline Blvd.

**Feb. 26, 9:30-11:30 AM:** Brunch at the Grange. Bring the whole family to enjoy a hearty breakfast and visit with your neighbors. Suggested donation of \$5/adult or \$12/family.

**Mar. 3, 5:30 - 9:30 PM:** Skyline School's "A Magic Auction." Please join us for Raffles, Fixed Price Merchandise, Silent and Live Auction. Please mail or drop your donation off at Skyline School. no later than February 8. Contact Natasha Jones at skylineauction@gmail.com with questions.

**Mar. 8, 7 PM:** SRN Board of Directors regular monthly meeting, Brooks Hill church, 11539 NW Skyline Blvd.

**Mar. 9-10:** Grange Garage Sale. Drop-off dates will be posted on the Newslite or you can email skyline-grange894@msn.com or call Sen at 503-621-3331 to arrange a drop-off time. Deadline for donating is noon on Wednesday, March 7.



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