The Wood Cookie

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# Sustaining Outdoor School

*by Jane Elder Wulff*

Faster than the six weeks it took to raise half a million dollars, the unprecedented grass-roots campaign to save MESD’s Outdoor School (ODS) last spring became the stuff of legend.

Seeing hard times ahead, a volunteer coalition had been working for months to build a large database from nearly four decades’ worth of past campers, student leaders, and staff, along with donors, sponsors, and countless friends and relations.

Still, when Portland Public Schools decided to cut Outdoor School from its spring 2003 curriculum, it was a body blow. ODS traditionally draws more than half of its students from Portland. Without these students, the program could not survive.

The coalition put out the call, and the rest is history - an incredible cliffhanger complete with hair-raising suspense, frazzled young heroes, and a cast of thousands. Volunteers and corporate sponsors appeared in the nick of time. Coffers overflowed with generous checks and hard-earned pocket change. At one point, the campaign raised $105,000 in 12 hours. The spring program was saved. Veteran professional fundraisers said they had never seen anything like it.

Cliffhanger rescues are great for the movies, but in the real world of public education, rescue does not mean survival. In another stopgap measure, Multnomah

County voters agreed last fall to tax their income an extra one percent to meet state budget shortfalls. This ballot initiative, known as the I-tax, funded Outdoor School through this year - but the relief is temporary.

“It was the first county income tax in Oregon,” says Scott Welch, a funding specialist hired to help MESD achieve a sustainable future for ODS. “It was pretty amazing. It’s what kept our schools open a full year.” But I-tax funding is vulnerable at best, and when it ends, no one is sure what the next step will be. “If the state situation is no better,” says Scott, “there will be no money to pay for Outdoor School.”

The passion many feel for saving Outdoor School is reflected in the name of its website - passonthememory.org. “My most positive school memories related to learning happened there,” says Scott, who attended Camp Howard as a sixth grader. “It was so different from the rest of school. You’re out of the classroom, you’re experiencing something with the other kids, but you’re not competing. There’s no penalty. You can work together. Outdoor School is one of the few opportunities for that type of education that’s offered in the public school system, and I would hate to see that go away.”

Working on a part-time appointment with the MESD Foundation, Scott is mounting a

coordinated effort to keep that from happening. First, the traditional Friends of Outdoor School is reorganizing to include the Outdoor School Support Network, an ad hoc group that formed before the 2003 campaign.

Scott explains that the Friends group has been around forever, and people recognize its name. Its members know the ropes and have clout, but until now they have mobilized only in a crisis. Support Network members tend to be younger, many of them recent students or staff with ODS experience that they are determined to hand on to the next generation.

“If we can combine the expertise and connections of FOODS with the passion and energy of ODSSN, then we’d really have something,” he says. “We could give that energy some direction and make it more effective. We’re looking at building a substantial membership organization much larger than either group alone - a dynamic base with a solid, workable, long-term structure.”

(Scott cheerfully pronounces these two awkward acronyms as “foods” and “odd-son,” and in fact it’s easier to think of them that way; in true Outdoor School tradition, where everyone involved gets a new name, they even begin to take on appropriate personalities - the one balanced and nourishing, the other slightly quirky and full of new ideas.)

In a series of public meetings this spring, the recharged FOODS group agreed that ODSSN would continue in its lobbying role as a separate entity from MESD, while itsmembers contribute their individual skills and energies to the larger effort.

Scott points out that many of Outdoor School’s 275,000 or so alumni still live in the region: “We could conceivably attract 100,000 or more members, but not all of them would have to be involved in everything. We’re working out a committee structure so people can choose to work on whatever interests them.”

Members can join the new FOODS with a free click on the website, and receive updates as committees are formed. A page called “Recurring Gifts” is subtitled “Simply the best you can do for Outdoor School,” but the site offers a host of volunteer opportunities and other ways to help.

Meanwhile Scott and a temporary steering committee of MESD staff and volunteers are developing a range of long- term options for the MESD board to consider. “It’s a matter of the board and Alternative and Outdoor Education staff and volunteers all coming together to enact a strategic plan,” he says. “We’re 18 months out from the I-tax going away, but the time to act is now. We’re used to thinking if you’re funded by one source, you’re healthy, but the reality is that if you have 20 sources, you’re more healthy. That’s the fundamental difference in strategic thinking between government and nonprofits. That’s the essence of this transition.”

# Outdoor School still in Crisis

Multnomah County School Districts will have zero resources dedicated to purchase the Outdoor School program as of June 30, 2006. School Districts are currently using Multnomah County income tax (I-Tax) revenue to contract for Outdoor School services. The I-Tax, a 3-year tax passed by Multnomah County voters in 2003 will expire in June 2006. It is critical that we work together until this time to identify and secure additional funding sources. Please join the Friends of Outdoor School to learn how you can become involved in this exciting and rewarding effort.

# Third Annual Auction Record Success

The annual Friends of Outdoor School Auction on April 30 was the most successful ever, raising just over $25,000 plus a $10,000 gift from the Wentworth Foundation to underwrite expenses.

“We doubled it this year,” said coordinator Scott Welch, “and we want to at least double it again next year. We’re especially grateful because the timing wasn’t ideal - people had just written out their I-tax checks.”

Over 130 guests attended the event hosted by former site supervisor Andy Lindberg. The evening included a special presentation to the organizers of the Save Outdoor School Coalition. The Coalition raised nearly half a million dollars in 6 weeks to restore Outdoor School last spring. Susen Ritchey, MESD Alternative and Outdoor Education Director, presented “Magic Penny” wood cookies to Cheryl Bland, Carrie Brown, Sara Ennis, Greg Roberts, Cindy Roberts, Jeanne Roy, Chad Stewart, and Briggy Thomas.

The Outdoor School Magic Penny Award, designed by Margaret Eng, began in the 1970’s. It symbolizes friendship and appreciation and is reserved as the highest commendation given by the program.

# Friends of Outdoor School Expands, Develops Committees

The Friends of Outdoor School (FOODS) has combined forces with the Outdoor School Support Network (ODSSN), the Outdoor Student Leader Network, and the Save Outdoor School Coalition. Together, these organizations are working to develop a long-term fundraising effort to ensure that Outdoor School will be available to all Multnomah County sixth graders for years to come.

The effort began in December as the organizations met to discuss ways to build on the excitement and energy of last year’s fundraising success. A steering committee was formed in January to assess the needs, skills, and resources found in each of the organizations. The ultimate goal was to determine how to form one strong, organized, and cohesive force that could work together to achieve sustainable funding for the MESD Outdoor School program.

The steering committee recommended that the Outdoor School supporters join forces under the common and easily recognizable Friends of Outdoor School name. The committee provided a structure consisting of several functional committees each focused on specific and manageable tasks. The chairs of the committees will make up the executive council, which will work initially to increase FOODS membership, develop overall strategy, and ensure effective communication between committees. The specific committees include:

* Executive Committee
* Development Committee
* Membership Committee
* Outreach Committee
* Public Events Committee
* Web Weavers Circle
* Student Leader Scholarship Committee

Detailed descriptions of each committee, including time commitment, are available on the Friends of Outdoor School website - [www.passonthememory.org,](http://www.passonthememory.org/) or from Scott Welch, 503-257-1774. Committees meet independently. FOODS meetings are held each quarter. The next meeting is scheduled for September 2004 at the Jean Vollum Natural Capital Center.

Each committee is actively recruiting members. We encourage you to explore this opportunity and consider which committee best matches your skills and interests.

# Outdoor School Spring Session Operations Update

* 4,083 6th Grade students attended Spring session
* 1,003 Student Leaders provided service during Spring session
* 3 inches of precipitation fell during Spring session
* Temperature averaged 52 degrees during Spring session
* 41,940 eggs were consumed
* 1,444 gallons of 1% milk were drank
* 168 25- pound turkeys were baked
* 8,875 apples were distributed
* 3,104 pounds of lettuce was eaten
* Over 200 nature hikes were completed
* 392 school buses were used during Spring session to transport sixth grade classes and Student Leaders.

# Song from Outdoor School

(Chorus) Peanut, peanut butter and jelly.

Peanut, peanut butter and jelly.

First you take the peanuts and you pick ‘em, you pick ‘em, you pick ‘em,

And then you smash ‘em, you smash ‘em, you smash, smash ‘em, smash ‘em.

And then you spread ‘em on the bread.

Two, three, four

(Chorus)

Then you take the berries and you pick ‘em, you pick ‘em, you pick ‘em,

And then you smash ‘em, you smash ‘em, you smash smash ‘em, smash ‘em.

And then you spread ‘em on the bread.

Two, three, four

(Chorus)

Then you take the sandwich and you bite it, you bite it, you bite it, bite it bite it

And then you chew it, you chew it, you chew it, chew it, chew it

(Chorus is garbled because your mouth is filled with peanut butter and jelly)

# Pumpkin Torte (Camp Scale)

*Laurie L. Holbert, Cook, Camp Arrah Wanna*

* 16 eggs
* 1 1/2 tablespoon salt
* 4 cups oil
* 3 tablespoons baking powder
* 12 cups pumpkin
* 3 teaspoons cinnamon
* 12 cups sugar
* 1 1/2 teaspoon cloves
* 12 cups flour
* 1 1/2 teaspoon ginger
* 1 1/2 tablespoon baking soda
* 1 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

Beat eggs, add oil, pumpkin, and sugar. Beat. Add dry ingredients. Pour into pans (6 x 10) and bake at 325 (convection), 350 (conventional) for 20-25 minutes.

Frosting

* 2 pounds cream cheese
* 2 cups margarine/butter
* 1 tablespoon vanilla
* 14 cups powdered sugar

(Makes approximately 120 pieces)

# Angry Garlic Lover’s Pasta Sauce

*Will “Cherokee” Waterbury, Site Supervisor, Milk Creek*

* 6 - 8 cloves minced garlic
* 1/4 cup olive oil
* 1 can Italian stewed tomatoes
* 1 tsp. dried basil
* 1/2 tsp. black pepper
* Optional - pinch of crushed red peppers

Blenderize tomatoes, basil, peppers; set aside Saute garlic in oil until lightly golden

Add contents of blender and simmer for 15 minutes

Best with penne, wagon wheel, or ribbon types of pasta. Also makes an excellent dip for French bread.

# Will “Cherokee” Waterbury

Recently, Will “Cherokee” Waterbury, the site supervisor at Camp Milk Creek did something out of the ordinary; he let a 6th grade student do the talking at the last night of campfire. A time traditionally used for the site supervisor to reflect on the week, Cherokee makes his rounds during the last dinner together to talk to the students to hear their perspective on their time at Outdoor School. He asks the sixth graders, “What would you say at campfire tonight?” and then teases them by insisting they take his place that evening. Predictably, the kids always decline, but this particular week, one girl said, “okay!”

“I made it sound worse and worse, but she didn’t back down,” Cherokee recalls with a smile, “she just kept saying ‘okay!’” The student did indeed address that week’s group, and as Cherokee explains, that is what Outdoor School is all about. “Promoting a manner of being that is overall positive and accepting,” is the key, and Cherokee and his staff have the responsibility of educating adolescents on the environment, while encouraging good social skills and the capacity to live harmoniously with not only other sixth graders, but with teenagers, all without the presence of moms and dads.

“Having the opportunity to guide the vision of the collective staff of what we want the culture of our site to be like and the experience of our children to be,” is Cherokee’s most valued component of being the site supervisor. And every week, Cherokee leads the Outdoor School experience made up of staff, sixth graders, and high school student leaders. Although the student leaders spend only a week at a time as a counselor at Outdoor School, countless come back as many as eight times.

The interaction with student leaders is frequently the occasion for Cherokee to make the strongest connections. While he enjoys the time he spends with sixth graders and his own staff, student leaders are really who create the magic that is Outdoor School. Without them, Outdoor School would be just another environmental education program. The experience is sometimes so remarkable for them, that former student leaders often become staff; Cherokee himself was a student leader in 1972.

Cherokee, rubbing his beard with his thumb and forefinger, appears deep in thought as he considers which animal he might be, if given the option. A lion, monkey, or dog? “A black-headed grosbeak,” Cherokee reveals, a choice that relates to his perpetual Outdoor School experience. “Everything is right in my Outdoor School world when the black-headed grosbeak is around. If I don’t see that bird, then something is haywire.”

As for rumors surrounding Outdoor School, Cherokee maintains that the sixth graders do not have to lick a slug to pass the week. Years ago, the students did have an opportunity to lick slugs, but “they carry hepatitis!” exclaims Cherokee, which is the sole reason why slug licking is now discouraged. “Most rumors come from seventh and eighth graders tormenting the sixth graders, telling them that Outdoor School isn’t any fun, or that they only get to take one shower a week. The kids are allowed two showers-it’s just that they have to take at least one.” But who has time for a shower anyway?

# PSU partners with Outdoor School

*by Scott Welch*

Portland State University students partnered with the Outdoor School program this spring to develop proposals designed to enhance outdoor school curriculum and student participation.

The students, enrolled in the “Grant Writing for Environmental Advocacy” senior capstone course, began the course by visiting Outdoor School to experience the program and identify potential needs. Students then prioritized these needs, chose four to pursue, and divided into groups to begin the fundraising process.

“Students were already interested in Outdoor School when they arrived on the first day,” said Instructor Celine Fitzmaurice, associate director of Community Programs at PSU’s Center for Science Education. “The site visits transformed their interest into commitment.”

Each group identified and researched potential funders, developed letters of inquiry, and produced formal grant applications. Several of the groups were able to schedule meetings with local foundations to discuss their projects and fine-tune their proposals.

The six-credit class, taught by Fitzmaurice with the help of many Outdoor School guests, presented their work to the Outdoor School in June.

“It was a pleasure working with the students,” said Scott Welch, development specialist, MESD Foundation. “Their professional products reflected their passion, energy, and creativity.”

The Senior Capstone is required for all graduating students at Portland State University. Each course collaborates with a community-based agency or school to address a community need.

Capstone courses are valuable because they:

* Provide an opportunity for students to apply the expertise they have learned in their major to real issues and problems in the community;
* Enhance the students’ ability to work in a team context with people from different fields of specialization; and
* Encourage active involvement in the community.

Each of the formal applications will be submitted to local funders. The Outdoor School hopes to continue this successful partnership in the future.

Project I - Starlab

During their participation in Outdoor School students learn about life in the natural environment around them, but many are left with questions about the universe above them. As the universe becomes more relevant to the human experience, the need for our children to learn about the stars becomes increasingly more important. The Outdoor School curriculum currently includes an evening “under the stars” where students receive an introduction to the night sky. Unfortunately, due to inclement weather, some students are unable to participate in this exercise.

The Outdoor School would like to answer this growing need with the purchase of a high-tech, portable planetarium called Starlab. As the students and their instructor get inside the universe, they learn about a wide range of subjects including astronomy, geography, meteorology, and more. Many things that can be taught in a large Planetarium can also be seen in the portable Starlab, giving students at the Outdoor School an opportunity for learning about the night sky regardless of the weather.

Project II - Funders’ Summit

A one-day funding summit will be held in Fall 2004 to produce a long-term financial plan to ensure the continued success of Multnomah County’s Outdoor School Program. Hosted by MESD and Friends of Outdoor School, this summit will bring together a dynamic group of Outdoor School stakeholders. By bringing together community leaders, the summit meeting would host a symposium where a long-term funding solution can be developed.

This summit is about saving an institution that has been an integral part of Oregon’s sixth-grade education for the past 39 years. Participation is an investment in the future of our community. The summit’s success would not only secure the future of Multnomah County Outdoor School, but also protect student’s access to a unique and formative experience.

Project III - Improving the Mental and Emotional Health of Mobility Restricted Students

Every year, 7,000 students attend Outdoor School. Of those students, 700 are students with special needs, including students with mobility restrictions. Unfortunately, students who are mobility restricted do not experience full participation in camp activities due to deficiencies in the current wheelchairs available and the varying terrain of the camps. In order to improve the quality of health and experience while at Outdoor School, these students need specialized outdoor wheelchairs.

This project will provide the Outdoor School program with two specialized wheelchairs. Each wheelchair is make of water resistant, lightweight material, which allows for easy transport and ease of access in and out of cabins at all of the Outdoor School sites. The specialized wheels are designed to handle any type of outdoor terrain including rocky trails, sandy beaches, and hills. With a one- on-one mentor program already in place at Outdoor School, each mobility-restricted student will have a trained adult to accompany

them and assist them while in the wheelchair.

Project IV -Translation Project

The Outdoor School experience is offered to all sixth grade students in Multnomah County, regardless of disability, language barriers, and other challenges. We hope to work toward alleviating the difficulty of the language barrier for Spanish speaking students by providing translated Outdoor School reading material. The reading material is an essential component of the science education at Outdoor School. In addition we would like to translate all reading materials for the parents of Spanish speaking students in order to provide increased understanding of the program.

Translated materials for those with English as a second language must be accomplished in order to create a balanced learning environment for both students and parents. Outdoor School not only provides hands on science learning, but also includes a Student Handbook, which was created to enhance the study in the field. The Student Handbook, combined with the other materials, is imperative to full participation in the curricula. Due to the unique nature of Outdoor School parents are also given reading materials that assist them in preparing their children for the experience. The reading material for parents also gives details on the schedule and many projects at Outdoor School among other pertinent information.

# Reflections from the class

* I could not get over the fact that this twelve-year-old boy probably knew more about the ecosystem than most of the adults I know. - C.J. Mead
* Everywhere I looked there was a child and instructor with a giant smile on their face.
  + Melissa Augustine
* It is very easy to become scared of the unknown; Outdoor School clarifies different cultures to the students and teaches them unity. - Chris Campisi
* Students were teaching and learning because it was a unique brand of fun.
  + B. Doreen McIntosh
* Outdoor School gives students who strain to keep their head above water in the classroom their moment to shine as well as giving teachers a reference point for how each student is best able to learn. - C.J. Mead
* Isn’t it amazing what can happen in one week?
  + Tami Bozeman

# Dr. Science

*Jeff“Snake” Dallas, Supervisor at Outdoor School’s Sandy River site*

**Tornados in the Pacific Northwest**

Normally we don’t think of the Pacific Northwest as a place where tornadoes occur. As we watch the news we think of places like Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma and other states located in “Tornado Alley.” However, we can and do get them when an occasional strong thunderstorm cell develops with the right combination of rotating winds. One of the most notable occurred on April 5, 1972. Lots of strong wind damage had been occurring in both Washington and Multnomah County from a strong thunderstorm cell moving through the area. Sometime after 12:00pm a tornado touched down on the Oregon side of the Columbia River destroy- ing several boats and part of two moorage facilities. It moved across the river to Brush Prairie where it caused 5-6 million dollars damage, killed 6 people, and injured over 300. Wind speeds were clocked at 120mph before equipment was destroyed. The tornado was estimated to be an

F-3 on the Fujita scale. It is considered the most devastating in Oregon history.

# ReDirect Home and Garden Show Benefits Outdoor School

For the second year in a row, the ReDirect “Natural Style” Home & Garden Expo dedicated 100 percent of its admission charge to Friends of Outdoor School. Friends of Outdoor School members and Outdoor School Student Leaders volunteered their time to collect donations at the door - often receiving more than the suggested donation from enthusiastic community members.

“People were standing in line to donate,” said Scott Welch, MESD Foundation Specialist. “Time after time, they wanted to tell us their experience at Outdoor School. It gave our volunteers a great feeling about what they were doing that day.”

The Expo, held the weekend of May 15 at the Lloyd Center DoubleTree Conference Center, offered healthy home and garden ideas while raising over $2,300 to benefit the Outdoor School program. It featured over 70 vendors, informational booths, speakers and workshops showcasing beautiful, healthful and sustainably oriented products, ideas, and services for homes and gardens.

Volunteers included: Christy Arrington, Allison Brown, Kristen Carey, Kurt Deutscher and Carrie Rambo, Margaret Eng, Sara Ennis, Hannah Goldberg, Kira Harvey, Matthew Maedchi Grant, LaToya Hudson, Kirstin Kendall, Lauren Scharnak, Carl Switzer, Briggy Thomas, Bryan Wiedemen.

*ReDirect, Incorporated is a local organization whose mission is to create tools that will promote the growth of businesses that promote socially responsible, environmentally wise, and healthy lifestyles.*

# Strider Cabin Poem, Week 6, Milk Creek

As we entered Outdoor School we didn’t know what to expect.

As a spider builds its web we build relationships.

As a hawk soars, we soar above the sky with knowledge.

Our friendship grew like the rings in a tree.

As with photosynthesis, we learn more and more about who we are.

While the river flows

Upstream is a cut-bank that will never come between us

Bedrock holds all of the layers of soil up As Bagpipes have held us up.

Weathering breaks up everything But will never break us up.

We slept in a clean cabin and ended up earning our ZZZ beads and clean cabin beads.

We also earned more than just beads...

# Student Reflections:

Everybody probably has been to a place where the air is fresh, the trees are green, and most of all a whole lot of fun to be. That place for me is outdoor school, and I’m not just saying that because I’m supposed to say that, I’m saying that because outdoor school truly is a wonderful place to be. When I hear the words outdoor school I want to know where and when.

I didn’t want to go to Outdoor School. I did not want to because I was stressed about science fair. My dad said “you will remember outdoor school when you’re 80 but you will forget science fair.”...I wish I could go to outdoor school every year. That was the funnest thing in sixth grade.

# Outdoor School Student Leader Scholarships Announced

Parents, students, and Outdoor School staff gathered together on June 10 to celebrate the 2004 Student Leader Scholarship Award winners. Just under $10,000 in scholarships was awarded to 10 student leaders for their outstanding service.

“Outdoor School would not be possible without the inspiring work of these young adults,” said Suzanne “Puffin” Marter, Outdoor School Coordinator. “They provide comfort and direction to impressionable sixth grade students while finding the same in themselves.”

Student Leaders are a rare combination of teacher, doctor, lawyer and sociologist. They are competent child psychologists with their sophomore textbooks as proof. They are strict disciplinarians with twinkles in their eyes. They must be skilled referees, baby-sitters, friends, and advisors. The Outdoor School Student Leader is a humorist in a time of crisis, an arbitrator in a time of conflict and a leader in a time of confusion. They are idols with their heads in a cloud of campfire smoke and their feet in the mud.

Each week Student Leaders combine the responsibilities of leading a cabin of eight to ten students with those of actively participating in a field study team for one of four areas of study. Over 1,500 student leaders provided at least one week of service during the 2003 - 2004 Outdoor School session. In order to be considered, students must be at least a sophomore, have approval from parents & the school, have passing grades, and have good attendance.

The scholarships are available to high school students who have served as a student leader at least three times. Each applicant is required to submit copies of their student leader evaluations, two letters of recommendation, and a written essay indicating how they intend to apply the experience to their future plans. Top candidates were then interviewed by the scholarship committee.

When I first began participating in the Outdoor School program I was a shy, nervous, and unconfident sophomore. I couldn’t identify any personal strengths or abilities. By the end of my first week I came away with knowledge of myself that I might never have gained...I know that my future would be missing something if I didn’t become involved in the betterment and developmental process of young people. I am ready to embark on the next phase of my life. Outdoor School provided me with the most important thing during my high school years and for the future, to always make sure that my life has room for those that need me.

$1,500 Winners

* Ardis “Zinga” Smith, Grant High
* Christy “Ruffles” Arrington, Grant High
* Miles “Hybrid” Church Kane, Lincoln High

$1,000 Winners

* Halley “Piper” Wunder, Grant High
* Whitney “Decanter” Holt, Lincoln High

$750 Winners

* Zachary “Tango” Thornhill, Franklin High
* Devon “Gidget” Golaszewski, St. Mary’s Academy
* Laura “Cypress” Taylor, St. Mary’s Academy

$500 Winners

* Michelle “Magenta” Duncan, Cleveland High
* Nilina “Vespa” Mason-Campbell, Lincoln High

# Thank You FRIENDS OF OUTDOOR SCHOOL MEMBERS

The following individuals and organizations have made contributions to Outdoor School program 7/01/03 through 6/01/04.

* Shara Alexander
* Charles Amsler
* Doc Angelos
* Ronald Atwood
* Ray and Jean Auel
* Barbara Ballou
* Molly Bolin
* Kitty Boryer
* Edmund Bouschor
* Eric Brody
* Kathy Burman
* Carolyn Campbell
* Patricia Campbell
* Jerelyn Carlson
* Kenneth Cheng
* Luci Chiotti
* Lena Coleman
* Robert Compton
* Maria Cruz
* Steven Daneman
* Vicky Davies
* Mary Dunsmore
* Bob Ellsperman
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* Susen Ritchey
* Eva Roberts
* Diane Rolph
* Douglas and Alexey Root
* Veronica Satalich
* Ronald Savage
* Judith Schoeck
* Natali Seehafer
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* Jesse Settlemier
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* Janeene Siler
* Mary Helen Simonson
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* Mel Solomon
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* Donna Strain
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* Martha Urman
* Mark Vlahakis
* Volunteers of America
* Ann Vrabel
* Waggener-Edstrom
* John Waller
* Phyllis Wasmuth
* Wentworth Foundation
* Mark Wheeler
* Kim Wiersum
* Joan Wilcox
* Wild Oats Market
* Working Assets
* Wy-East Kayak
* Cynthia Young
* Kathleen Young

# Students Relive the Oregon Trail

*By Shauna Lee Stevenson, program specialist*

The Spring 2004 session of Oregon Trail Overnight was a great success. 977 students and 345 parents and teachers joined an excited staff at Mt. Hood Camp Kiwanis for a chance to take a step back in time to the Oregon Trail for 25 hours. This year 53 high school student leaders also volunteered as instructors for the program.

Field studies focused students “On the Trail, In the Wilderness, At the Homestead, and In the Kitchen.” Some favorite highlights in each study area included a trip to Laurel Hill and the chance to lower a ‘wagon’ down the steep 60% grade, panning for fool’s gold in the creek, practicing the use of old time logging tools, and using old hand-crank grain mills to make flour to take home.

After the studies were done on day one, students had the chance to cook themselves a hamburger and dance the Virginia Reel. One student wrote “Making everything was fun especially the Virginia Reel.” The evening finished off with a campfire program put on by the staff, student leaders, and fourth graders; a great chance for all in “camp” to participate, just like pioneers on the trail.

Oregon Trail Overnight is an opportunity for fourth graders to live a little of the past, and for leaders to bring history alive. The program is educational and enjoyable for all and continues, in its seventh year, to be a successful addition to teachers’ fourth grade history curriculums.

In his thank you to the staff one child wrote, “Dear Every one, I had a good time weth you gus. I realy want to go visit you gus for a whil. We learnd lots of things how the Pioneers ust to leve. Thank you for all of that. I realy want to go agin.”

Most of the forty teachers talked about returning with their classes next spring. We hope to see our numbers increase so that more fourth graders can get the opportunity to experience a step back into history.

# Outdoor School Donation Options

* OUTRIGHT GIFTS: Multnomah Education Service District Foundation accepts gifts in the form of cash, checks and credit cards designated to the Outdoor School program. MESD Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization for tax deduction purposes. MESD Foundation also accepts gifts of appreciated securities and other gifts as agreed upon.
* SPONSORSHIPS: MESD Foundation invites businesses and corporations to sponsor special events and programs throughout the year. The Friends of Outdoor School has opportunities for sponsorship of their annual dinner & auction benefit and of unique program components.
* GIFTS IN KIND: MESD Foundation accepts most gifts- in kind for use by the Outdoor School program. These gifts need to be approved prior to acceptance.
* MATCHING GIFTS: Your company or corporation might match your contribution. Contact your human resources department to find out if your donation can be doubled.
* VEHICLE DONATIONS: You can receive a tax deduction for your donation of any used car, truck, RV, boat or other vehicle and designate the proceeds to the Outdoor School program.
* INCENTIVE GIFTS: MESD Foundation/Outdoor School has teamed up with several incentive programs. Participating merchants will donate a portion of your purchases at selected businesses. These include Albertsons, Pizza Schmizza, and e-Scrip merchants (including Safeway and Wild Oats). You can designate your purchase to any of the participating MESD programs.
* PLANNED GIFTS: Leave a legacy to the Outdoor School program through a bequest in a will, life insurance, real estate, charitable remainder trusts and through naming the MESD Foundation as a beneficiary in an IRA, 401 9k) or 403 (b) plan. Your gift will help ensure the educational future of these special students.

Please contact Scott Welch, MESD Foundation, at 503-257-1774 or see our web site at [www.passonthememory.org](http://www.passonthememory.org/) to donate or to obtain additional information about each of our donation options.