

OUR BIG BACKYARD

Explore great places and more
with Metro

BLUE LAKE, GOLD MEDAL

Champion disc golfer Michelle Nava prepares for world-class competition at Blue Lake Regional Park in Fairview

pg. 08

FOUR QUESTIONS

Get to know Mia Sheppard and the sport she loves (*hint: it involves rivers and steelhead*)

pg. 04

THE INTERTWINE

If you're looking for adventure, head north for a 'daycation' in Vancouver

pg. 07

REGIONAL ROUNDUP

Got ideas about getting around? Make your voice heard on transportation, climate change and more

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If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we've already crossed paths.

So, hello. We're Metro – nice to meet you.

In a metropolitan area as big as Portland, we can do a lot of things better together. Join us to help the region prepare for a happy, healthy future.

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If you have a disability and need accommodations, call 503-220-2781, or call Metro's TDD line at 503-797-1804. If you require a sign language interpreter, call at least 48 hours in advance. Activities marked with this symbol are wheelchair accessible: 

Bus and MAX information

503-238-RIDE (7433) or trimet.org

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Stay in touch with news, stories and things to do.

oregonmetro.gov/connect



This is your page.

Starting this summer, **Our Big Backyard** will publish your comments in this space. **Tell** us about your experience at **Canemah Bluff**, which is featured in the **Destination Guide** on page 6. **Respond** to the cover story about champion disc golfer **Michelle Nava**. **Share** your ideas for the future of **Willamette Falls**, after reading about this Oregon landmark on page 15. **Suggest** a place for fellow readers to explore.

Send your name, city and comments (100 words or fewer, please) to ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov.

You talked, Metro listened

The debut of Our Big Backyard generated tremendous response. We were pleased to add hundreds of readers to our mailing list (hello, newcomers!) and quadruple our capacity for nature walks at Newell Creek Canyon. Questions and concerns are important, too. After receiving several inquiries about the thickness of the new magazine, we decided to try a lighter-weight paper for this edition. Like the region, Our Big Backyard is a work in progress. Thank you for reading.

Nature News



Something's Different Here



WHAT'S NEW AT METRO PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

New trails are taking shape across the region, giving you new ways to exercise, play and commute.

CLACKAMAS COUNTY

Spring is a great time to explore the eastern reaches of the region's signature trail, the Springwater Corridor. You can now ride your bike all the way from downtown Portland to Boring Station Trailhead Park, 21 miles away. Clackamas County recently finished the final 2.25 miles of the Springwater, with support from Metro's voter-approved Natural Areas Program.

FAIRVIEW

More than half a mile of new trail traverses Blue Lake Regional Park, making a connection with the region's 40-Mile Loop network. The addition, at the junction of the Gresham-Fairview and Marine Drive trails, travels along the levee through a scenic part of the park. Come check out the new trail – and, while you're at it, bring a picnic, learn to play disc golf or, beginning May 1, rent a paddle boat to explore the park's namesake lake.

HILLSBORO

Someday soon, the Rock Creek Trail will have a new wayside: Orenco Woods Nature Park. Metro and the City of Hillsboro teamed up to buy land for the 43-acre park in 2011, and recently approved a blueprint shaped by residents of the historic Orenco neighborhood. A network of trails and viewpoints will lead visitors through Orenco Woods, which will include picnic shelters, a nature play area and restrooms. Metro and the City sold 11 acres in the corner of the site to Polygon Northwest, helping foot the bill for the project and give rise to parkside housing.

NORTH PORTLAND

Chimney and Pier parks are next-door neighbors, but until recently, they might as well have been miles apart. A narrow gully and mainline railroad made it impossible for walkers, runners and bicyclists to safely go back and forth. Thanks to a new pedestrian bridge, visitors can now explore both city parks in a single trip. A partnership between the City of Portland and Metro, this project adds to the North Portland Greenway and fills a key gap in the 40-Mile Loop. The new connector also makes it easier for St. Johns residents to reach Metro's nearby Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area.

If you have energy left, check out a new section of the Columbia Slough Trail between North Denver and Vancouver avenues. The City of Portland recently completed more than a mile of the emerging pathway, which hugs its namesake: a network of lakes, wetlands and slow-moving channels that stretches from Fairview to North Portland. Along the way you might glimpse mountain views and dozens of bird species against an industrial backdrop, bringing together nature and city life. Regional voters made the new trail possible by approving a 2006 bond measure, allowing Metro to secure the rights to build it.

SOLVE GETS OREGONIANS INVOLVED IN NATURE

STORY BY *Heather Coston* / PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOLVE

From hosting community clean ups and planting events at Nadaka Nature Park in Gresham to restoring habitat along the banks of Abernethy Creek in Oregon City, SOLVE brings together thousands of volunteers to improve some of the region's most important natural areas.

"When we develop a project, we look at how our volunteers can make a difference while getting out in nature and playing in the dirt," said Steve Kennett, SOLVE's Team Up program coordinator. "When we work to restore the environment, we also restore ourselves, our connection to the earth and to each other."

Metro has helped make this work possible through Nature in Neighborhoods grants, which support community nature initiatives across the Portland metropolitan area. Ten SOLVE projects have received funding and other resources from Metro during the last decade.

From neighborhood cleanups to ivy and blackberry removal, SOLVE projects are led by community groups or conservation organizations. Sometimes, school-based "Green Teams" provide leadership and labor while connecting children to local parks and natural areas.

Grants not only foot the bill for volunteer and staff support, they also help attract partners. For example, a Metro grant to restore Beaver Creek Canyon developed partnerships with the Sandy River Basin Watershed Council, Multnomah County and the State of Oregon.

"Our partnership with Metro can be the glue that brings other organizations to the table," Kennett said. "Nature in Neighborhoods grants can last two to three years, which helps us start and sustain a project while looking for other partners and funding resources."

SOLVE AT WORK

Three projects fueled by Metro

BALTIMORE WOODS, North Portland

By pulling blackberries and planting native trees and shrubs, SOLVE volunteers helped the Friends of Baltimore Woods transform a degraded habitat corridor in North Portland's St. Johns neighborhood. The project brings together neighbors to protect an important stretch of Oregon white oaks and forge future trail connections.

RINEARSON CREEK, Gladstone

Students helped restore habitat and monitor wildlife along Rinearson Creek, gaining real-world experience while they made a difference. "When we first came here, the park was overgrown," one West Linn High School student wrote for a project newsletter. "Through the process of planting, clearing, mulching, and caring, the park is full of growing, happy native plants that will improve the environment."

CARTER CREEK, Lake Oswego

At Carter Creek, removing invasive shrubs and planting native trees puts volunteers up close and personal with mayflies, snails, crayfish and more. It also provides shade and prevents erosion, helping restore the creek to better health.

Get involved with SOLVE:
solveoregon.org

Got a nature project?

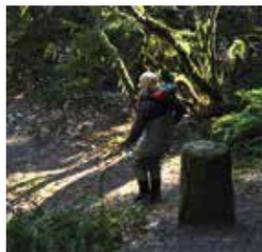
METRO'S GOT GRANTS.

Are you involved in an innovative project that nurtures nature in your community or connects people with the outdoors? If so, apply for one of three Metro grant programs that can help get your project on the ground, forge partnerships and build long-term success.

For more information, visit
oregonmetro.gov/grants.

4 Questions with Mia Sheppard

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY BY Julie Cash



When fly fishing fans gather at Oxbow Regional Park for the Sandy River Spey Clave, they'll have a hometown champion in their midst.

Mia Sheppard, who lives in nearby Brightwood, is the reigning winner of the sport's international competition. She won the title last spring at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, where she cast her line 144 feet.

Sheppard was introduced to spey casting in 2001, while working as a commercial fisherman in Alaska. Today, she's a proud member of the Pacific Northwest's large spey casting community, sharing her love for the sport with beginners and competitors alike.

Q: Why do you fly fish?

A: I feel pretty lucky that my parents brought me up learning to respect the environment and be outside. I love the outdoors. My family raised me playing outside and going on camping trips. Fishing and hiking were ingrained in me from an early age. When I was 6 years old, my uncle took me on my first fishing trip on the Sandy River. After school, it just seemed natural that my profession would take me in the direction of outdoors. I spent two summers working for the forest service in the area, fishing in my spare time. Then off to Alaska to experience commercial fishing.

In 1995 while snowboarding Mount Hood, I met who would later be my husband – Marty. In 2001, I ran into Marty again in Alaska, where he taught me the double-handed technique and, in more ways than one, I was hooked. I had never fly fished before, and Marty claimed it's the only way to catch steelhead. Now we raise Tegan, our beautiful 6-year-old daughter, and have a fishing guide business together.

Q: What's your favorite fishing story?

A: I have so many favorite memories fishing. There is nothing like watching someone catch their first steelhead! It's something they will never forget. There's laughter, high fives, excitement even if they don't land the fish. Watching someone connect with something that everyone is trying to figure out is priceless. Being able to take my daughter on overnight fishing trips, take her camping and watch her fish, seeing her experience nature for the first time. I need to have that connection to the outdoors, and fly fishing is a great excuse!

Q: Where do you go fishing?

A: I guess my favorite place to be would be a desert river. I think it's amazing to go out in the middle of nowhere to a part of eastern Oregon and you think to yourself, "There's no water here." Then you come across a beautiful river with lots of green all around; it's really pretty. Oregon has so many great spots. The Sandy River is a lush rainforest, and we have an incredible run of winter steelhead right in our own back yard, only 30 minutes from downtown.

Q: How can a beginner learn to fly fish?

A: Come to Oxbow Regional Park on May 16, 17 and 18 for the 14th Annual Sandy River Spey Clave, meet me and take advantage of the free spey casting lessons. Gear, breakfast and lunch will be provided for the whole family. This is a great way to get on the river and bring the kids.

What does the fox really say?

JUST ASK A METRO NATURALIST

STORY BY

Laura Oppenheimer Odom



Note to Norwegian comedy-turned-rock duo Ylvis: A fox doesn't say "ring-ding-ding" or "wa-pa-pa-pa-pa-pow" or "hatee-hatee-hatee-ho." In fact, fox noises aren't even a mystery, as last year's hottest viral video would have you believe.

Just ask Metro naturalists. After years engaging nature lovers at regional parks, the Metro team could provide fodder for a sequel to "The Fox," which has garnered more than 380 million views on YouTube with its catchy lyrics and wacky costumes.

"The makers of that video are crazy creative, but might not know their animal," Metro naturalist Dan Daly says. "Fox do vocalize, and there are lots of recordings online of their sounds."

If there's no iconic fox noise, that's because they make so many – from nighttime screams to playful chatter. Fox can easily be mistaken for other animals, such as birds and raccoons.

Unfortunately, Daly says, fewer fox say anything at all these days in the Portland metropolitan area. When he started visiting Oxbow Regional Park in the late 1990s, he often saw red fox building dens, hunting and literally prancing through the ancient forest – but rarely spotted a coyote track. In 2008 Metro confirmed its first coyote den at Oxbow, and red fox have become increasingly scarce ever since. As far as the naturalists know, not a single fox lives at the park today.

"This question of how and why such a dramatic population flip would occur sort of, well, haunted me," Daly says.

In 2012, Daly satisfied his curiosity when he attended the Wilderness Awareness School's intensive wildlife tracking course. He wrote a research paper exploring if and how coyote could displace red fox in the Willamette Valley.

Daly explains it like this: Wolf dominates coyote, and coyote dominates fox. It appears that red fox have declined in the Willamette Valley as they are pushed to the fringes of an expanding coyote population.

But this battle wouldn't be happening at all without European settlers, who hunted, poisoned and trapped the dominant gray wolf when they arrived in the region, Daly says. While historic accounts show dense populations of gray wolves, there is no evidence of coyote or red fox. By eliminating the wolf, early settlers unknowingly rolled out the red carpet for coyote and red fox to fill the void.

As silly as "The Fox" might be, Daly says, the song motivates kids to learn about its namesake. "It's engaging people's imagination with a mysterious and elusive animal," he says. "While their sounds are known, they surely aren't as known as cows, crows and owls."

So, if your school-aged kid is belting out the lyrics, feel free to suggest a twist:

*"The secret of the fox
Ancient mystery
Somewhere deep in the woods
I know you're hiding
We know your sounds
You make so many
But soon you could be gone
Chased by coyotes"*

Watch "The Fox" video: [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)
Learn about foxes and hear real fox noises: [foxforest.com](https://www.foxforest.com)

FRI
16
MAY

14TH ANNUAL SANDY RIVER SPEY CLAVE

WHERE Oxbow Regional Park

SAT
17
MAY

COST Free with your annual pass or \$5 per vehicle/\$7 per bus; all gear, breakfast and lunch provided

SUN
18
MAY

GET EVENT DETAILS

flyfishusa.com/spey-clave.htm

RESERVE AN OXBOW CAMPSITE

800-452-5687 or oregonmetro.gov/oxbow

LEARN ABOUT MIA SHEPPARD

littlecreekoutfitters.com

Conserving Nature, One Acre at a Time.

STORY BY *Kate Holleran* / PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Kim Nguyen and Laura Oppenheimer Odom*



As a Metro natural resource scientist, Kate Holleran sees nature's biggest challenges and most glorious surprises – and she has the muddy boots to prove it. Go behind the scenes on her journey to restore the region's voter-protected land.

Coming soon: SCOUTERS MOUNTAIN NATURE PARK

Scouters Mountain will feature trails and a picnic shelter. Stay tuned for details about a celebration on Thursday, Aug. 28.

Learn more: oregonmetro.gov/scoutersmountain



FROM CINDER CONE TO WILDLIFE HAVEN

When Scouters Mountain Nature Park opens this summer, visitors will notice towering Douglas fir trees and stunning Mount Hood views. But, as a natural resource scientist, I saw something entirely different the first time I explored this volcano rising above Happy Valley.

I saw 20-foot-high invasive English hawthorn trees, with thorns an inch long and very unpleasant to walk through. One of many extinct cinder cones across east Multnomah County, Scouters Mountain provides valuable habitat to local wildlife and a critical place for migrating birds to rest. But, like many of Metro's new natural areas, it needed a good dose of ecological science to nudge it toward better health.

Restoring a landscape means first getting to know the land before taking any significant action to change it. So I crisscrossed the property many times with a team of natural resources practitioners, picking their brains about possible restoration methods. We consulted with a geologist to identify any landslide issues, with the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde for insights into Native American use. We talked with descendants of the first European settlers who homesteaded this land and the Boy Scouts of America, from whom we purchased most of the natural area. We checked in with our neighbors, ecologists, foresters and weed specialists.

As we walked and talked, we discovered more about Scouters Mountain: most of the extinct cinder cone is a healthy forest between 40 and 100 years old, with some trees more than 250. The northern slope was a mess, though, dominated by invasive plants with very limited value to wildlife. I did find a few gems hidden among the weeds: scattered Oregon white oaks (a hint about the historical vegetation) and some prime mountain beaver (*Aplodontia rufa*) habitat in

drainages full of sword fern. The Oregon white oaks tell me that the slopes of Scouters Mountain probably burned frequently in the past, allowing these fire-resistant trees to become established. Then as humans controlled wild-fire, Douglas fir trees moved in and outgrew the oaks, leaving just a few scattered on the warmer west slopes. The mountain beaver tunnels explained the lack of trees growing anywhere occupied by these prolific seedling consumers. I also discovered a yellow jacket nest the hard way: by walking through it. I hope to not find it again.

Using a cool analysis tool called Lidar tree canopy mapping, we created a map of vegetation heights. Interpreting the tree canopy image allowed me to identify and quantify areas dominated by weeds. Anything taller than 70 feet was likely native, anything shorter than 25 feet was likely non-native. With the map and a little more ground-truthing, we had an accurate measure of how much restoration we had ahead of us – and where. Time to get to work. Starting in 2012, Metro restoration contractors cut and sprayed the invasive trees and shrubs, spread native seed, thinned a dense stand of 50-year-old firs. We made habitat for wildlife like pileated woodpeckers, brown creepers, ensatina salamanders, western red-backed voles and big brown bats by creating snags and down wood. Finally, we planted more than 25,000 native trees and shrubs.

If you're hiking at the new nature park someday, you might see me, so say hello. I'll be walking through the woods from time to time to see how everything is growing. The obvious restoration work is done, but we'll be caring for the young seedlings and checking for unwanted weeds for years to come.



Featured Species:

Meadow checkermallow

A fabulous guest list lines up to enjoy the nectar of the meadow checkermallow, a native wildflower that shines in the spring. The painted lady, American lady and Westcoast lady are three native butterflies that like to sample the checkermallow's wares. Native bees, wasps and beetles also use the checkermallow (*Sidalcea campestris*) as a food source.

Once much more widespread, this tall, showy plant is easy to re-establish in butterfly gardens and hedgerows in the northern Willamette Valley. Growing native wildflowers like checkermallow in our yards, gardens and natural areas helps ensure that native pollinators have the food sources they need to survive and thrive in our urbanizing landscape.

Get your hands muddy

SAT
05
APR

NATIVE PLANT CENTER VOLUNTEER VENTURES

Bring spring to life by helping care for rare seeds, bulbs and plant materials at Metro's Native Plant Center in Tualatin. You'll support regional restoration projects, helping protect water quality and create wildlife habitat at voter-protected natural areas across the region. This is a family-friendly opportunity, and no experience is needed. Gloves, tools, water and snack provided. Wheelchair accessible with advance arrangement. ♿

SAT
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APR

SAT
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MAY

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17
MAY

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07
JUN

SAT
21
JUN

WHERE Native Plant Center,
2661 SW Borland Road, Tualatin

WHEN 9a.m. to 1p.m.

COST Free

AGES 10 and older

REGISTER Registration required,
503-319-8292

DIFFICULTY



VOLUNTEER GIGS, IN EVERY SHADE OF GREEN

Whether you want to pull weeds or wade through wetlands, lead field trips or help in the office, Metro has a volunteer opportunity for you. Gain skills, explore some of the region's newest natural areas, meet intriguing people – and help the region protect the natural beauty that makes this a great place.

Check out volunteer opportunities oregonmetro.gov/volunteer

Field Guide

CANEMAH BLUFF NATURAL AREA

STORY BY Ashley Conley

PHOTOGRAPHY BY Laura Oppenheimer Odom

The drive into Canemah Bluff Natural Area offers a clue that this park is unlike most others. Situated on top of an ancient landslide, Canemah is one of the oldest mapped neighborhoods west of the Mississippi River. Arriving from the top of the Oregon City plateau, the descent down the narrow neighborhood roads eventually levels out and showcases eye-popping and unexpected vistas. From Oregon white oak and madrone woodlands to vibrant upland prairies brimming with spring wildflowers and birds, you can experience a diversity of habitats in a relatively short walk.

Canemah Bluff is located less than half a mile upriver from the largest waterfall by volume in the Pacific Northwest, Willamette Falls. Thanks to the nearby falls and a natural harbor with deep, placid water, Canemah was a major canoe landing and gathering location for Native Americans. The area was also the focus of early European American settlement in the Willamette Valley during the mid-1800s, with the Oregon Trail ending in Oregon City.

A trip to the natural area also brings you up-close with a famous Oregon resident: Sam Barlow, who helped to scout a new overland route of the Oregon Trail to take pioneers around the south side of Mount Hood. The Barlow Road allowed settlers to avoid the treacherous journey down the Columbia River and encounters with Celilo Falls, which was costly and sometimes fatal. Barlow retired in the town of Canemah, and his family is buried in the historic pioneer cemetery adjacent to the natural area.

Shaped by the forces of geology and rich in cultural history, the landscape of Canemah Bluff invites all who want to experience its natural beauty firsthand.



CANEMAH BLUFF NATURAL AREA

815 FOURTH AVE.,
OREGON CITY, OR

DRIVING

At the end of Fourth Avenue park in the small lot at Canemah Neighborhood Children's Park, which serves as a gateway to the natural area.

KNOW WHEN YOU GO

Canemah Bluff is open sunrise to sunset. No bikes or dogs, please. Be aware of poison oak.

AMENITIES

Basketball hoops, a playground and picnic shelter are located at the entry park, which is managed by Oregon City; a bathroom is open seasonally. Interpretive signs welcome you to Metro's natural area.

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Nestled in the historic Canemah neighborhood, the natural area is a short drive from downtown Oregon City. Fuel up with authentic Mexican fare at Loncheria Mitzil, 212 Molalla Ave. After exploring Canemah, refuel with the great taplist and unique menu at the Highland Stillhouse Scottish pub, 201 South Second St.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT!



CAMAS



OREGON WHITE OAK



RED BREASTED SAPSUCKER



OREGON SUNSHINE

SEASON BY SEASON

SPRING: Spring brings an abundance of color to upland prairies. Many native wildflowers bloom from March to May, including common camas, Brodiaea lilies and white rock larkspur. Warbling vireo, Cassin's finch, and black-headed grosbeaks vocalize along the trail. Turkey vultures pop up from below the bluff and ride the thermals to higher elevations. Osprey commonly perch in trees along the bluff, waiting to dive into the Willamette River in search of a meal.

SUMMER: Summer heat scorches the open prairie, turning the luscious colors of spring into a parched array of dusty yellows and browns. Along the walk toward the cemetery, Madrone flowers that persist into early summer buzz with bees and hummingbirds. If you slow your pace and quiet your footsteps, you might see the elusive mountain beaver weaving in and out of basalt rocks that line the path. The most primitive living rodent, actually more closely related to squirrels, the mountain beaver makes its own hay by methodically collecting plants and letting them dry at the entrance to its elaborate tunnel systems.

FALL: Autumn is harvest time, and Canemah residents are preparing for winter. Western gray squirrels and black-tailed deer are just a couple creatures that take advantage of Canemah's mast crop of acorns. Hidden from view much of the year, the fruiting bodies of mushrooms appear above ground. Look for the other-worldly elfin saddles hidden amongst leaf litter. Make your way to upper trails of the upland conifer forest and search for antler rubs on small, prominent trees, where bucks announce their presence to other deer.

WINTER: Take a walk back in time and search for remnants of Oregon's ancient past. The bluffs are formed from Columbia River basalt, most of which flowed from eastern Oregon 15 to 17 million years ago. More recent Boring lava flows also reached this land, pouring out of shield volcanoes to the east. Several large chunks of this gas-pocked lava can be seen along the trails, most likely broken off in landslides triggered by the Missoula Floods that swept into the Willamette Valley numerous times 15,000 to 20,000 years ago. At the prairie overlook, check for stunning views of High Cascades volcanoes.

OUR COMMON GROUND



Miles of trails for singletrack, kayaks, and sports quacks like me. Clark County is ballin'!
- Recreation Duck



Take a Daycation to Vancouver's urban wetlands!

Release your inner cyclist on the Burnt Bridge Creek Trail. Take Vancouver's bike-friendly streets north to a flat eight-mile trail of warm meadows and woody wetlands.

How-To:

BIKE VANCOUVER'S URBAN WETLANDS

- 1. Fuel Up.** Before you hit the trail, sip a latte or try a delicious buckwheat figgy scone from Torque Coffee Roasters.
- 2. Choose Your Adventure.** There's a fork in the road at the Burnt Bridge Creek Trail with excitement in both directions.
- 3. Take a Left.** Discover the Stewart Glen Trailhead, where the creek flows through a marshy canyon into Vancouver Lake.
- 4. Take a Right.** Head to Leveritch Park for disc golf and picnicking. If you're still up for more, bike to both trailheads for a smooth 16-mile out-and-back.
- 5. Toast!** There's no better way to end your Daycation than kicking back with a pint at Loowit Brewing Company.



Featured Partner:

FRIENDS OF RIDGEFIELD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The westernmost of four federal wildlife refuges near Vancouver, Ridgefield's river-hugging 5,000+ acres of lush marshiness beckon ducks and tykes alike. From the Cathlapotle Plankhouse, learn about Chinookan art and culture. On the seasonal Kiwa Trail, stroll through open wetlands and an understory of Oregon ash. Here's to making new Friends!

Visit ridgefieldfriends.org



The Intertwine is:



OUR NETWORK OF PARKS
TRAILS, AND NATURAL SPACES

© Kevin L. Hayes



100+ ALLIANCE
PARTNERS

© Gary Witt



SOMETHING FOR
EVERYONE

Chris Bidleman.com

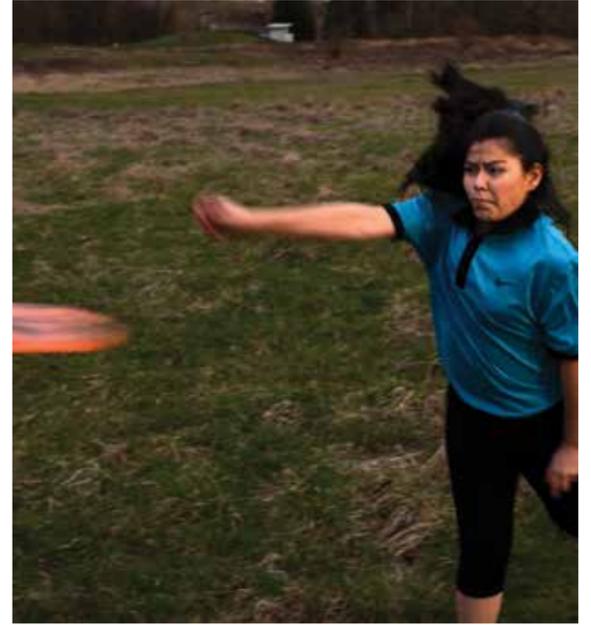
Blue Lake, Gold Medal



STORY BY *Molly Simas* / PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Fred Joe*

Teenage disc golf champion trains at Blue Lake Regional Park

Like many girls her age, Michelle Nava talks fast and laughs easily. She loves to draw, craft, read and spend time with friends. A seventh grader at R.A. Brown Middle School in Hillsboro, Nava recently took up volleyball and celebrated her 13th birthday.



One thing that sets Nava apart? She's a world champion disc golfer. Last summer at the junior championships in Kansas, Nava dominated her age group, finishing 40 strokes ahead of the runner-up.

And in September, here in the region, Nava placed second in the intermediate women's division at the 2013 U.S. Women's Disc Golf Championship. The competition was held at Pier Park in North Portland and Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park in Fairview – Nava's stomping grounds. When she was learning the sport, her older brothers took her to Blue Lake.

Completed in 2012, the course is certified gold-level by the Professional Disc Golf Association for its combination of length, difficulty, equipment and design. It attracts international competitions, yet it's also open to beginners – with each player vying to reach 18 targets in the fewest throws possible.

From an athlete's standpoint, Nava said, the layout is amazing. "My favorite part of Blue Lake is how much land there is, how long each hole is," she said. "It's one of the biggest courses in Oregon."

Nava's father, Luis, said the course prepared his daughter to compete at an international level. During the championship, she received advice from the sport's biggest names. "I was close to crying," she said, "because these were the people I saw on YouTube and now they all know me."

For the Nava family, disc golf is more than a sport – it's also a bond. Michelle credits her success to her big brothers, one of whom placed seventh in the advanced men's division. The siblings practice together almost daily.

"They're married, they have kids, they don't live close," Nava said. "If it wasn't for disc golf, I wouldn't be seeing them at all."

Dad has a front-row seat. Last summer, while Luis Nava watched his daughter play at local parks, he noticed how she taught other golfers – kids and adults alike.

"I was very excited, doing that with her. She's learning how to do community service, how to do service for other people," said Luis, who serves on Metro's public engagement advisory panel. "It's something that she loves."

Another thing that caught Luis' attention: the way the sport brings people together. As he sees it, disc golf is cheap, easy and inclusive. "I saw entire families playing," he said. "That's something you can't do with other sports." Luis was so compelled, he decided to learn. He borrowed old discs from his kids and got out on the course.

Nava said her dad is doing well for a beginner. To hear her talk about disc golf, you could easily mistake her for somebody much older. She's articulate and focused, and has a clear grasp of her ability and drive.

In reality, she's a kid who just entered middle school, years younger than most people who are serious in her sport. Nava said she enjoys the looks on adults' faces when they realize her skill level. "They're surprised when I teach them something new," she said.

Luis Nava has mixed feelings about his daughter competing with grown women.

"She'll be in categories like 'women intermediate, women advanced,'" Luis said. "I don't like too much how she's maturing beyond her age, but on the other hand, she's getting better and better. It's amazing how she's advancing."

Nava said she loves taking her friends to the disc golf course; she's trying to get more kids from her school to start playing. "They're all doing things like hip-hop and basketball, and I'm practicing disc golf four or five days a week," she said.

"My favorite part of Blue Lake is how much land there is, how long each hole is. It's one of the biggest courses in Oregon."

–Michelle Nava

But Nava recognizes that, given her talent and age, she has a serious shot at a future in the sport she loves.

"I see it being a part of my life forever. I want to go touring. I see my idols winning these big tournaments. I want that to be me one day," Nava said. "If I just keep practicing, I can get there."

In Person: Disc golf 101



INSPIRED BY MICHELLE NAVA?

Try disc golfing at Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park.

WHERE 20500 NE Marine Dr., Fairview

COST Free with your annual pass or \$5 per vehicle/\$7 per bus.

LEARN MORE

oregonmetro.gov/bluelake

CHECK OUT THE LOCAL SCENE

stumptowndiscgolf.org



DISCS

The Blue Lake park office sells commemorative 50th anniversary discs for \$10. Stop by on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Get Involved

Wild about nature?

PHOTOGRAPH BY Julie Cash

Sign up for a three-part series to learn valuable skills, make friends and explore some of the region's most spectacular natural areas. If you want to engage on a deeper level, one of these class trios is for you.

LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF THE BIRDS

Three-class series

Have you ever wondered what birds talk about? Would you like to see more wildlife, such as mink, coyote or birds of prey? Start seeing what you've been missing! Songbirds are in constant dialogue about the whereabouts of land and aerial predators. Explore the art and science of interpreting bird movements, songs and alarm calls. This series begins with a classroom session and progresses to two field days at Cooper Mountain Nature Park. Detailed directions and meeting locations will be sent after you register.

THU
24
APR

Indoor intro

WHERE NE Portland
WHEN 6:30 to 8:30p.m.

SUN
27
APR

Field days

WHERE Metro natural areas
WHEN 8:30a.m. to 12:30p.m.

SUN
04
MAY

REGISTER oregonmetro.gov/calendar COST \$50 AGES Adults and teenagers DIFFICULTY

WILDLIFE TRACKING

Three-class series

Wild animals are all around us, yet they're often difficult to observe in the field. Through their daily travels, wildlife leave behind their stories on the landscape. This three-part series kicks off with an evening lecture at a pub, covering the fundamentals of animal tracking. During two field days, we will build our skills of reading and interpreting tracks and sign. Directions and locations will be sent to registered participants.

WED
14
MAY

Indoor intro

WHERE SE Portland pub
WHEN 6:30 to 8:30p.m.

SAT
24
MAY

Field days

WHERE Metro natural areas
WHEN 9:30a.m. to 1:30p.m.

SUN
01
JUN

REGISTER oregonmetro.gov/calendar COST \$50 AGES 16 and older DIFFICULTY



Classes

SAT 05 APR FAMILY NATURE EXPLORERS AT MOUNT TALBERT

Family Nature Explorers invites families to come together for open-ended explorations in Metro's natural areas. A family can be one or two parents or grandparents, and children 5 and older. Join Metro naturalist Ashley Conley to wander this extinct lava butte in search of animal tracks, migrating song birds and spring wildflowers.

WHERE Mount Talbert Nature Park
WHEN 10a.m. to 1p.m.
COST \$6 per person, \$11 per family
AGES 5 and older
REGISTER North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District, 503-794-8092
DIFFICULTY

THU 17 APR BOTANY FOR BEGINNERS

Are you a beginner botanist? There are hundreds of thousands of plants in the world. This after-work walk will take a look at common native trees and shrubs, so you can start to recognize the plants you see in our native forests. Meet Naturalist Alice Froehlich in front of the main entry to the Oregon Zoo at 5:25 p.m.; the tour will leave promptly.

WHERE Oregon Zoo
WHEN 5:30 to 6:30p.m.
COST \$6 per person, \$11 per family; parking meters
AGES 7 and older
REGISTER oregonmetro.gov/calendar
DIFFICULTY

SAT 12 APR SPRING BIRD AND TURTLE WALKS

Join Metro naturalist James Davis for a morning bird walk or afternoon turtle walk at Smith and Bybee Wetlands – or, if you're really adventuresome, make it a double-header.

WHERE Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area
WHEN Bird walk 9 to 11:30a.m. Turtle walk 1 to 2:30p.m.
COST \$6 per adult, \$11 per family per class
AGES Bird walk 10 and older Turtle walk 5 and older
REGISTER oregonmetro.gov/calendar
DIFFICULTY

SAT 26 APR SPRING BIRD AND WILDFLOWER WALK AT MOUNT TALBERT

During spring, Mount Talbert bursts with sights and sounds. Rare oak woodlands offer refuge for migrating songbirds such as warblers, tanagers and orioles. A revitalized oak savanna and a wet prairie meadow, increasingly rare habitats in the region, bloom with wildflowers such as camas and woolly sunshine. Join Metro naturalist Alice Froehlich to discover the beauty of this island oasis, nestled in an urban area. Binoculars available to borrow.

WHERE Mount Talbert Nature Park
WHEN 10a.m. to 1p.m.
COST \$5 per person
AGES 7 and older
REGISTER North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District, 503-794-8092
DIFFICULTY

SAT 24 MAY

SAT 21 JUN

BIRD WALK Learn to identify birds by sight and song during the peak of migration and nesting, when they are lively and noisy. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair.
TURTLE WALK Learn about the natural history of painted turtles, see them through a telescope, and handle and examine shells of specimens.

Advanced registration required. No pets.**DIFFICULTY KEY**



 EASY
 


 MODERATE
 


 STRENUOUS
**SAT
26
APR****SPRING BIRD WALKS AT COOPER MOUNTAIN**

Spring is the easiest time to see and identify the birds of Cooper Mountain, because they are in their best breeding plumage and singing up a storm. Join Metro naturalist and expert birder James Davis for this walk for beginners and intermediate birdwatchers. Bring your own binoculars or borrow a pair on site, and be sure to dress for standing outside on an open hilltop.

WHERE Cooper Mountain Nature Park**WHEN** 9 to 11:30a.m.**COST** \$10 per person**AGES** 10 and older**REGISTER** Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, 503-629-6350**DIFFICULTY****SAT
07
JUN****SMITH & BYBEE WETLANDS KAYAK TOUR**

Have you always wanted to paddle at Smith and Bybee Wetlands? Let Alder Creek Kayak and Canoe provide the kayak, paddle and personal flotation device. Learn about local wildlife and the natural history of the wetlands from Metro naturalists James Davis and Ashley Conley. Some kayaking experience recommended.

WHERE Smith & Bybee Wetlands**WHEN** 8:30 to 11:30a.m.**COST** \$28 per person**AGES** 14 and older**REGISTER** oregonmetro.gov/calendar**DIFFICULTY****SAT
10
MAY****MOTHER'S DAY BIRDS AND BLOOMS OF CANEMAH**

Instead of taking flowers to mom, why not take her to the wildflowers? Join Metro naturalist Dan Daly for a leisurely stroll through Canemah Bluff Natural Area near Oregon City to see and learn about common wildflowers. Enjoy the serenade of nesting songbirds and views of the Willamette River and historic Canemah cemetery. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair.

WHERE Canemah Bluff Natural Area**WHEN** 1 to 3p.m.**COST** \$6 per adult, \$11 per family**AGES** 6 and older**REGISTER** oregonmetro.gov/calendar**DIFFICULTY****SUN
11
MAY****SMITH AND BYBEE WETLANDS CANOE BIMARAN TOUR**

A "bimaran" is two canoes connected with 2 x 6 boards, creating a stable "pontoon boat" that is perfect for young children and those who are inexperienced or nervous about paddling a canoe or kayak. Metro naturalists James Davis and Ashley Conley are your guides to the wildlife and natural history of the wetlands. A "what to bring" letter and more information will be emailed after you register.

WHERE Smith and Bybee Wetlands**WHEN** 12:45 to 3:15p.m.**COST** \$12 per adult, \$8 per child**AGES** 5 and older children must be accompanied by a registered adult**REGISTER** oregonmetro.gov/calendar**DIFFICULTY****SAT
31
MAY****OAKS, FLOODS AND FIRES OF CANEMAH BLUFF**

With sweeping views of the Willamette River, rare white oak woodlands and historic Canemah Pioneer Cemetery nearby, Canemah Bluff brings a bit of the wild close-in. Join Metro naturalist Ashley Conley to explore how floods, fires and world-class geologic events created the woodlands, prairies and ephemeral wetlands of Canemah Bluff.

WHERE Canemah Bluff Natural Area**WHEN** 10a.m. to 1p.m.**COST** \$6 per person, \$11 per family**AGES** 7 and older**REGISTER** oregonmetro.gov/calendar**DIFFICULTY****MON
26
MAY****SAT
31
MAY****SMITH AND BYBEE WETLANDS CANOE AND KAYAK TOUR**

Join Metro naturalists James Davis and Ashley Conley to learn about wildlife and natural history on a three-hour canoe and kayak tour. Boat, paddle and flotation device provided by Alder Creek Kayak and Canoe. Participants can select solo kayaks or a tandem kayak or canoe with a partner. Two adults in a canoe can add one or two young children. A "what to bring" letter and more information will be emailed after you register.

WHERE Smith and Bybee Wetlands**WHEN** 8:30 to 11:30a.m.**COST** \$28 per adult, \$8 per child**AGES** 14 and older (adult rate), younger kids (ages 5-13) can be passengers in a canoe**REGISTER** oregonmetro.gov/calendar**DIFFICULTY****SUN
15
JUN****FATHER'S DAY ANIMAL TRACKING AT OXBOW REGIONAL PARK**

Oxbow is a tracker's paradise when beaver, mink, otters and deer leave their stories in the sand. With practice, beginners can learn to read the ground like an open book. Join tracker Terry Kem along the banks of the Sandy River to learn the basics of track identification and awareness skills needed to watch wildlife at close range.

WHERE Oxbow Regional Park**WHEN** 10am-1:30pm**COST** \$6 per adult, \$11 per family; \$5/car \$7/bus**AGES** 8 and older**REGISTER** oregonmetro.gov/calendar**DIFFICULTY****TUE
24
JUN****TWILIGHT TUESDAY AT COOPER MOUNTAIN**

Twilight is a magical time. Join Metro naturalist Ashley Conley on a stealthy dusk hike to search for wildlife in the park. Magnificent vistas from atop the mountain will also give us a chance to spot the moon and bright planets in the summer sky. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair on site. Meet at the Nature House.

WHERE Cooper Mountain Nature Park**WHEN** 7 to 9:30p.m.**COST** \$10 per person**AGES** 8 and older children must be accompanied by registered adult**REGISTER** Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, 503-629-6350**DIFFICULTY****SUN
29
JUN****BIRD AND WILDFLOWER WALK AT COOPER MOUNTAIN**

Cooper Mountain is a great park to explore, thanks in part to controlled burns that have created a rich habitat for nesting songbirds and native wildflowers. Join Metro naturalist Alice Froehlich on a casual walk through the park's oaks and prairies. If we are lucky, we will spot the elusive and beautiful Lazuli bunting or Western bluebird. Binoculars and field guides available to borrow.

WHERE Cooper Mountain Nature Park**WHEN** 10a.m. to 1p.m.**COST** \$10 per person**AGES** 8 and older children must be accompanied by registered adult**REGISTER** Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District, 503-629-6350**DIFFICULTY****Summer at the zoo****NOT JUST FOR THE ANIMALS**

Are your kids wild about animals? Sign them up for a weeklong day camp at the Oregon Zoo, where they'll explore the habits and daily lives of some of the zoo's residents. Children from age 4 through students entering ninth grade devote a week to learning and fun, with crafts, songs, stories, snacks, animal visitors and in-depth tours.

RESERVE YOUR SPOT oregonzoo.org/discover

Destination Guide

Key

-  RESTROOMS
-  PICNIC FACILITIES
-  TRAILS
-  CAMPING
-  PLAYGROUND
-  WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE
-  CLASSES EVENTS VOLUNTEER



1

BLUE LAKE REGIONAL PARK

oregonmetro.gov/bluelake

VISIT: 20500 NE Marine Dr., Fairview

COST: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

Whether you're looking for serious exercise or a lazy day on the water, a kid-friendly romp or a grownup picnic, you'll find it at Blue Lake Regional Park in Fairview. Rent a paddle boat or canoe, cast a line or go for a swim in the park's namesake, a natural lake fed by underground springs. You can also explore a nature-themed playground, a 'sprayground,' a discovery garden, sports facilities and a wetland with a viewing platform and trail. Don't miss the disc golf course!



2

BROUGHTON BEACH

oregonmetro.gov/broughton

VISIT: 4356 NE Marine Drive, Portland

COST: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

Throw on your swimsuit and flipflops, grab your towel and head to one of Portland's best urban beaches. Across from Portland International Airport, Broughton Beach provides a clean, safe, sandy place to play along the Columbia River. You can enjoy walking, beachcombing, sunbathing, picnicking, swimming and more. On a clear day, you have a great view of Mount Hood.



3

CANEMAH BLUFF NATURAL AREA

oregonmetro.gov/canemah

VISIT: 815 Fourth Ave., Oregon City

Canemah Bluff Natural Area is a perfect place to gaze at the Willamette River below, marvel at oak trees overhead, photograph colorful spring wildflowers and learn about this historic area in Oregon City. Start your journey at Canemah Neighborhood Children's Park, where you'll find picnic tables, a playground, a basketball court and restrooms. Continue into the natural area, following more than a mile of unpaved trails through a mosaic of habitats. Birders can spot chipping sparrows, red-breasted sapsuckers, white-breasted nuthatches, orange-crowned warblers, hawks and eagles.



4

COOPER MTN. NATURE PARK

oregonmetro.gov/coopermountain

VISIT: 18892 SW Kemmer Rd., Beaverton

Hike, jog, watch wildlife or simply enjoy views of the Chehalem Mountains and Tualatin Valley at Cooper Mountain Nature Park, just south of Beaverton. More than three miles of trails pass through forests, prairies and oak woodlands. If you are quiet and lucky, you might catch a glimpse of rare animals such as Northern red-legged frogs and Western gray squirrels. Young visitors can explore a nature-inspired playground, and adventurers with wheelchairs can enjoy a three-fourths-mile loop trail.



5

GLENDOVEER GOLF COURSE & FITNESS TRAIL

oregonmetro.gov/glendoveer

VISIT: 14015 NE Glisan St., Portland

TEE TIME: playglendoveer.com or 503.253.7507

In the mood for golf, tennis, jogging or a stroll? Make a beeline for Glendoveer Golf Course and Fitness Trail – a hub of sports and community in outer Northeast Portland. Beginners often start with the relatively flat, par-71 west course; experienced players take on hills and bunkers at the par-73 east course. A covered driving range is heated during colder months. Reserve one of four indoor tennis courts, sign up for lessons – or enjoy the two-mile fitness trail. Whichever sport you choose, refuel at the Ringside Steakhouse.



6

GRAHAM OAKS NATURE PARK

oregonmetro.gov/grahamoaks

VISIT: 11825 SW Wilsonville Rd., Wilsonville

Ride your bike through a restored oak woodland, stroll through a conifer forest and spot birds from a wetland overlook at Graham Oaks Nature Park in Wilsonville, where three miles of trails let you choose your adventure. Watch for native wildlife such as white-breasted nuthatches, Western bluebirds, orange-crowned warblers and Western gray squirrels. Five plazas make ideal spots to rest, reflect and learn about Graham Oaks' history, from Kalapuyan tribes who gathered food to the family that farmed the land. Explore beyond the park on the regional Ice Age Tonquin Trail.



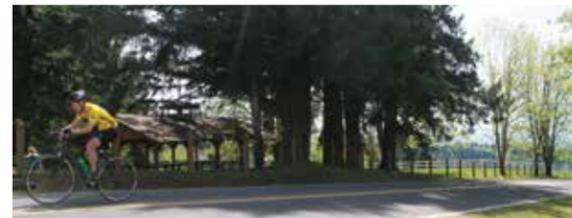
7

HOWELL TERRITORIAL PARK

oregonmetro.gov/howell

VISIT: 13901 NW Howell Park Rd., Portland

Visit a piece of Oregon's past, nestled among farms on Sauvie Island. The region's natural and cultural history come together in one serene setting at Howell Territorial Park. Bring a picnic to enjoy under the shelter, bring binoculars to watch for birds that flock to the park's wetlands, bring a basket to pick apples from the pioneer orchard. Learn about Sauvie Island and the families who shaped it, and relax in the shade of an authentically restored 1850s farmhouse. Howell also makes a great place for a wedding.



8

MASON HILL PARK

oregonmetro.gov/masonhill

VISIT: NW Johnson Rd at intersection with Munson Rd., Portland

Mason Hill Park provides a scenic wayside for cyclists exploring the rolling hills beyond Forest Park, in western Multnomah County. Home to a one-room schoolhouse from 1891 to 1944, the park still feels light years removed from modern life. Lollygag in the shade, take in spectacular views of the Tualatin Valley and eat a picnic lunch under the shelter, which has the original school bell mounted on top. If you come by car, be prepared to park in a narrow roadside spot.



9

MOUNT TALBERT NATURE PARK

oregonmetro.gov/mounttalbert

VISIT: 10695 SE Mather Rd., Clackamas

A forested oasis towers above busy roads, shopping centers and neighborhoods in Clackamas. Slip into Mount Talbert Nature Park to explore the four-mile trail network, check out the views and enjoy a picnic. Keep your eye out for deer, Western gray squirrels, pileated and hairy woodpeckers, white-breasted nuthatches and Western tanagers. Mount Talbert is the largest in a string of extinct volcanoes and lava domes that stretch across the east side of the region.



10 OXBOW REGIONAL PARK

oregonmetro.gov/oxbow

VISIT: 3010 SE Oxbow Parkway, Gresham

COST: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

Oxbow Regional Park provides a perfect launch point for swimming, kayaking, rafting or fishing in the majestic Sandy River Gorge. When you've had enough water, explore 15 miles of trails through Oxbow's ancient forests. Reserve a camping spot for the night, and gather around the fire for summertime nature activities and music. You might bump into mink, beavers, raccoons, fox, deer, osprey, songbirds, elk, black bears or cougars. Every fall, nature puts on one of its greatest shows: salmon return to their spawning grounds to lay their last eggs, before dying in the waters where they were born.



11 SCOUTERS MTN. NATURE PARK

oregonmetro.gov/scoutersmountain

Rising above Happy Valley, Scouters Mountain Nature Park offers a lovely vantage point to admire Mount Hood – and slip into a shady forest. Climb the steep, fir-lined road to the parking lot. From there, you can walk a loop trail or enjoy lunch under a handsome picnic shelter. If you ever visited the Boy Scouts lodge that used to stand here, you might recognize salvaged pieces. Although the land is now a public park, its spirit of adventure remains.



12 SMITH AND BYBEE WETLANDS NATURAL AREA

oregonmetro.gov/smithandbybee

VISIT: 5300 N. Marine Drive, Portland

Surrounded by warehouses and port terminals in North Portland, Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area is one of the region's best-kept secrets. Take the Interlakes Trail or go by canoe or kayak to explore one of America's largest urban wetlands. Either way, you might find beavers, river otters, black-tailed deer, osprey, bald eagles and Western painted turtles. You'll also find a water control structure that is restoring this network of sloughs, wetlands and forests.



Boat Ramps | oregonmetro.gov/boats

13 CHINOOK LANDING MARINE PARK

VISIT: 22300 NE Marine Dr., Fairview

COST: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

With six launching lanes on the Columbia River, Chinook Landing is one of Oregon's largest public boating facilities. The park offers picnic and viewing areas, wetland and wildlife habitat, disabled-accessible docks, an archery range, restrooms and a seasonal river patrol station.

14 M. JAMES GLEASON MEMORIAL BOAT RAMP

VISIT: NE 43rd Ave. & NE Marine Dr., Portland

COST: \$5 per car, \$7 per bus (free with annual pass)

Minutes from downtown Portland, the Gleason boat ramp provides a convenient public launch on the Columbia River. Recently upgraded amenities include extra launch lanes, boarding docks, restrooms, single-car parking, river maps and a river patrol office.

15 SAUVIE ISLAND BOAT RAMP

VISIT: Burlington Ferry & Sauvie Island Rds., Portland

Enjoy the quiet waters and wildlife of the Multnomah Channel. Recent improvements include a new launch ramp, parking lot, accessible restrooms, lighting and native landscaping.



Tools For Living

Make a clean sweep

From basic housekeeping to major remodeling, Metro provides instructional videos, cleaning recipes, disposal tips, gardening guides and more to help you cultivate a healthy home and save a little money, too. Ask Metro for easy tools for living – with a call or a click.



Spring sprucing



Safer, healthier home projects

Deep cleaning can often reveal the need for those once-in-a-while chores, like caulking the tub. It can also be the inspiration for bigger jobs, like painting the living room or redoing the floors. Projects like these can come with toxic chemicals, but there are easy ways to keep your family safe.

Ask Metro for cleaning recipes and safer home-improvement alternatives.



MetroPaint. Feel good paint. Feel good price.

MetroPaint is previously unwanted paint remade new. Screened for quality and rebled into desirable colors, it's evolved paint ready for a new purpose – indoors or out.

On Metro's website Watch a video to learn how MetroPaint is remade, peruse colors and find retail locations.

Controlling pests, protecting pets



In the home

Ants, fleas, spiders, yellowjackets? Learn how to handle and prevent a variety of household pests without resorting to costly and toxic chemicals.

On Metro's website Watch short instructional videos.



In the yard

Reduce garden pests by cultivating plants that attract pest-eating birds.

Locating plants where they can thrive can reduce the work it takes to care for them once they're established.

Compost and mulch foster fertile soil that nurtures the garden and helps make plants less susceptible to problems.

On Metro's website Watch videos, download coupons and guides, and sign up for the e-newsletter.

Dealing with discards



One key step to a healthy garden and a safe home: Detox the garage.

Safely dispose of garden chemicals and other hazardous waste like paint, batteries, motor oil and disinfectants at a Metro household hazardous waste facility. Any hazardous products you keep on hand should be out of reach of children and under lock and key.

Ask Metro what's hazardous, how to handle it and where to take it.



Toss less: First repair and reuse.

When spring cleaning yields a truck-load of discards from the closets and the shed, simple sorting can help you save money at the transfer station and extend the life of items that may not be garbage yet. Consider repairing or donating shoes, electronics and other items, and make the landfill the last resort.

Ask Metro by calling the hotline or searching the online database for recycling and reuse options.

Ask Metro ABOUT TOOLS FOR LIVING.

503-234-3000 oregonmetro.gov

Regional Roundup



STORY BY *Laura Oppenheimer Odom* / PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Mark Gamba*

Willamette Falls, rediscovered

BLUEPRINT CALLS FOR NEW WATERFRONT DISTRICT IN HISTORIC OREGON CITY

Walk down Main Street in historic Oregon City, and you'll reach a dead-end at a complex of hollow industrial buildings. This former paper mill separates Oregonians from one of the state's scenic and cultural treasures: Willamette Falls, roaring through the river just out of view.

But not forever. A new blueprint lays the groundwork to transform the property, reconnecting Oregonians with the Falls while creating jobs and buzz in Oregon City.

Under a framework plan up for approval by the city commission, the 22-acre site would be rezoned for a public destination along the waterfront and a mix of shops, restaurants, offices and housing. As much as 835,000 square feet of new mixed-use development could rise on the long-time mill site – more total floor space than the Moda Center or Bridgeport Village. A network of walking- and biking-friendly streets would link the new Willamette Falls District with the rest of downtown Oregon City.

A new blueprint lays the groundwork to transform the property, reconnecting Oregonians with the Falls while creating jobs and buzz in Oregon City.

Thousands of Oregonians have weighed in on the future of the land since Blue Heron Paper Co. closed in 2011. The property generated strong public interest, not only because it provides a front-row seat to the most powerful waterfall in the Pacific Northwest, but also because it is an important Native American cultural site and the birthplace of industry in Oregon. Oregon City, Metro, Clackamas County and the State of Oregon teamed up to explore possibilities.

The master plan is expected to be approved this summer, solidifying a community vision and clearing barriers to redevelopment. It gives a developer flexibility to put its mark on the property, with the opportunity to build everything from hotels to health clubs, museums to markets, offices to light industrial buildings.

Some things aren't negotiable: Developers have to reflect the site's natural setting and industrial history. Make it easy to walk and bike. Blend in with downtown Oregon City, while creating a unique sense of place in the new waterfront district. Preserve key historic structures when it's feasible – and, when it's not, incorporate artifacts into the design. Promote healthy habitat along the Willamette River. And build something that will last.

Explore the vision: rediscoverthefalls.com



Shape the future

Tailpipe emissions and transportation plans might sound esoteric, but they'll affect how you get to work, what kind of neighborhood you live in and what companies set up shop in the greater Portland region.

That's why Metro is asking for public input this spring as several major policy choices move forward. This year, the Metro Council and regional partners will make decisions about how the region approaches transportation and land use – and invests in putting those choices on the ground.

1 CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES

Help shape a proposal to reduce tailpipe emissions while supporting local and regional plans for downtowns, main streets and employment areas. Climate Smart Communities brings the region together to respond to a state requirement in a way that also creates healthy communities and a strong economy.

2 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Weigh in on a vision for how people get around by car, foot, bike, bus, MAX, truck and more. Decisions made this spring will update the region's long-term transportation blueprint, guiding investments that connect communities, create better pedestrian and bicycle networks, improve transit service and make it easier to do business.

3 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

See how the region is moving from the transportation blueprint to results on the ground and weigh in on the transportation projects scheduled for funding in the Portland metropolitan area for the next four years.

Take an interactive questionnaire by May 5 to tell Metro how the region is doing and what should come next. oregonmetro.gov/participate

Join your neighbors, community leaders and Metro councilors at a community forum to discuss how the region should respond to challenges and opportunities.

MULTNOMAH COUNTY

5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Thursday, April 3

Madison High School library
2735 NE 82nd Ave., Portland

Metro Councilors Sam Chase and Bob Stacey

CLACKAMAS COUNTY

5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 9

Oak Lodge Sanitary District building
14611 SE River Rd., Milwaukie

Metro Councilors Carlotta Collette and Shirley Craddick

WASHINGTON COUNTY

5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Thursday, April 17

Beaverton Library, Cathy Stanton Conference Room
12375 SW 5th St., Beaverton

Metro Councilors Kathryn Harrington and Craig Dirksen



Metro

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Portland, OR 97232-2736

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It's (Y)our Nature

Warren W. Aney | Cooper Mountain Nature Park

Whenever my family from California visit us, I take my 11-year-old grandson Will on a nature outing. We've climbed Beacon Rock and explored Chanticleer Point in the Columbia Gorge, hiked and observed birds at Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge in the metro area. On New Year's Day this year, Will and I went to see Cooper Mountain Nature Park, taking Will's younger sister Sasha (6 years old) with us for her first outing. The two of them enjoyed seeing the trees, bushes and birds on this foggy day, interacting with nature and with each other. They both appreciated and learned from nature.

- Warren W. Aney, Tigard



IT'S (Y)OUR NATURE

What does nature look like through your lens? For a chance to appear in this space and win two tickets to any event at the Oregon Convention Center (up to \$100 value), submit a photo taken at a Metro park or natural area - your friends and family, a slice of wildlife or a beautiful sunset, for example. Include a description of your experience, in 100 words or less. Where were you? What were you doing? What captured your attention?

Send your picture and description to:
ourbigbackyard@oregonmetro.gov

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