



Celebrating our community park

BY JANIS MOHR-TIPTON AND JANELLE DUNLEVY

April 29 was a wondrous, sunny day for gathering with the community to celebrate our thankfulness for Cantrall Buckley Park and the people who have helped make so many new additions and improvements to it. We have had a tremendous outpouring of financial and volunteer support throughout the last few years. This support has allowed the Park Enhancement Committee (PEC), led by Janis Mohr-Tipton, to focus on enhancing the park through the installation of artwork, native plant restoration, invasive plant removal, and acknowledgement of our cultural ties to the land and the people who have touched this region of Oregon. These improvements have allowed us to bring outdoor education to the Applegate in a setting rich with history, diverse in vegetation, touched by the river, and loved by the community.

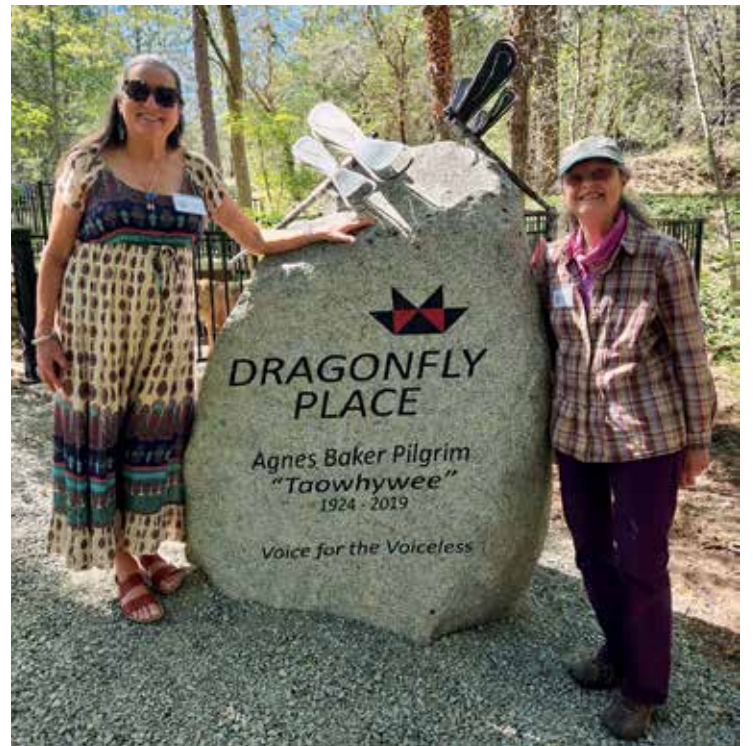
The day started with a great social time for folks to gather, visit with old friends, and meet new ones too. The Southern Oregon Songwriters Association (SOSA) created an acoustic environment where

the gatherers could enjoy their picnic lunches, music, and people. A Ruch Outdoor Community School (ROCS) music ensemble, directed by Mr. Flock, opened our event and brought us to tears of joy with their rousing rendition of *We Are the World* in song and sign. Mary Buckley Mikkelsen welcomed everyone with her heartfelt comments reminding us of all the people who have influenced the land and envisioned this public space of beauty that all of us could enjoy. We were then rewarded with more information about the successful programs and partnerships that have been created through the work in the park. "We are so fortunate to have such a beautiful park that has spanned generations, creating memories and moments to be forever cherished and new memories for the next generations to make," said Cathy Rodgers, PEC member and former board member of A Greater Applegate. Many hands worked together to plan and host this event, a grateful and happy day for all of us.

Ranch Winery and Harry and David. SOSA and ROCS staff and students and SOSA filled the day with music and lemonade! Jackson County Parks staff have been excellent partners, encouraging community connection and supporting the new additions and projects, while wrestling with the impacts of climate change to this forested park.

After the "Thankfulness" program we encouraged visitors to experience the artwork, education, culture, and restoration throughout the park. SOSA musicians continued to entertain with their original songs and lyrics, APWC staff provided information about their education and restoration programs, and PEC introduced our new interpretive signs, special boulders, and the recently dedicated Dragonfly Place, the PEC's first cultural exhibit, honoring the life and work of Takelma elder Grandmother Agnes Pilgrim Baker. Interpretation is currently being developed, and a flora study trail will be added that ties this site with the trail to the three bridges and other parts of the park.

Cantrall Buckley Park is so special to so many residents of the Applegate Valley and southern Oregon. We will continue to organize fundraisers to complete our projects. We will continue to organize cleanup days to help with the extensive reduction of natural fuels needed around



The Dragonfly Place, dedicated to the life of Grandmother Agnes Baker Pilgrim. Janis Mohr-Tipton (right) and Mary Buckley Mikkelsen (left) have worked closely with Grandmother Agnes's family to make this site a reality.

the park. We will continue to do all that we can to make this park a welcoming, educational, and special park for everyone. We hope you will consider donating to the park through gifts of money or time.

If you are interested in helping with any aspect of the park, please contact Janis Mohr-Tipton (janis.agapark@gmail.com). As a community we have great ownership in its care along with all the general maintenance that Jackson County Parks performs. Thank you to everyone for your support and patience while we navigated and waited out the last few years. We could not have picked a nicer day than April 29 to gather and celebrate!

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Volunteers and donors were honored and thanked at the Cantrall Buckley Park Celebration. Elementary students decorated gift bags and RiverCrest Ranch provided special thank-yous to legacy donors.

The PEC, along with board members and staff from AGA and the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council (APWC), worked to honor and celebrate the pledges of time and money that many friends of the park have given over the years. The volunteers, generous donors (\$25-\$499), and legacy donors (\$500+) all received certificates of appreciation and gift bags with items donated by RiverCrest

Announcing the Cantrall Buckley Park Coloring Book

BY THALIA TRUESDELL

Get out your colored pencils! It has been an incredible year teaching observation and drawing lessons to kindergarten through fifth grade students at Ruch Outdoor Community School and working closely with six middle-school students to put together the Cantrall Buckley Park Coloring Book.

This educational and very entertaining book is now available at many local businesses. It will serve as a reference guide and mini field guide for all ages, covering flora, fauna, and special features of Cantrall Buckley Park, but pertaining to the whole valley as well.

With input from local experts to make certain we got our facts straight, we set out to have proper habitats, relative sizes of animals, and reference materials, but because of our alphabetical presentation, we loosened up our parameters as the delightful pictures took shape.

While we strove for accuracy, we went along with a little whimsy, as well. The book is peppered with self-portraits of children playing in the park, walking dogs, and so much more than just raw scientific



The M-N page from the Cantrall Buckley Park Coloring Book.

information. It just kept getting better and better! We hope you will enjoy the final result. Be sure and visit local businesses from Jacksonville through Murphy to get a copy!

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