



Art is happening in the park

BY JANIS MOHR-TIPTON

Educational Art Walk

Jacksonville artist Cheryl D. Garcia will create 11 metal sculptures over the next two and a half years to grace the natural beauty of Cantrall Buckley Park with southern Oregon's first sculpture park. Visitors will experience sculptures of local flora and fauna, including a variety of larger-than-life birds and a gigantic mock orange, shooting star, and wild Oregon iris installed along the Art Walk. Each sculpture will be accompanied by educational information.

In April, many generous community members gathered at Valley View Winery for a fundraiser, which raised over \$23,000 to implement the new Art Walk. The event was sponsored by A Greater Applegate (AGA) and the Cantrall Buckley Park Enhancement Committee (PEC) and was organized by Tom Carstens.

The sculptures will add to the work of Jacksonville mosaic artist Jeremy Criswell's playful, larger-than-life mosaic turtle, "Tuffy," which already resides in the playground for children to play on. There are additional plans for Jeremy to finish and install the community mural on the exterior of the newly renovated restroom. In the future there will also be a solar educational display with a large community-built sundial next to a new solar array and outdoor classroom.

Generous donors

Many thanks to all who donated to the Art Walk (as of May 1, 2018):

Legacy Donors will be permanently recognized with an engraved boulder: Antonio Aquilar and Matt Katzenson, Boaz and Matia Brizman, Mike and Carol Burrill, Tom and Kathy Carstens, Matt and Donna Epstein, Barbara D. Formanek, John and Bonnie Rinaldi, Sean and Sonya Roden, Greg and Debbie Shultz, Greeley Wells, and Applegate Valley Garden Club.

Other generous donors will collectively be recognized on plaques: Larry and Gaye Anderson, Bill and Lyn Boening, Larry and Shannon Buscho, Judy Crowe, Don and Linda DeWald, Pat Gehres, Nancy Goodwin, Ken Gregg, Jerry and Yolanda Haynes, Gail Kuzma, Alice LaMoree, Whit and Jo Parker, Annette Parsons, Ed and Ginny Polish, Michael Riding and Michele Brown-Riding, Paul Tipton and Janis Mohr-Tipton, Magda Vahey, Chris and Maria Wilkey, Ron and Sharon Williams, and Janice Wilt.

Valley View Winery and Jacksonville Inn Event Services. Many thanks to the Wisnovsky family at Valley View Winery for hosting the Art Walk event and for the



Image of the Shooting Star sculpture by artist Cheryl Garcia.

delicious wine. Thanks also to Janet and Platon Mantheakis from Jacksonville Inn for creating the delectable treats.

A shout-out to all the park committee members who helped put this event together and the AGA board members who assisted at the event.

You, too, can help by putting your thumbprint on this groundbreaking project. Join the many other community members to reach the goal of raising \$12,000 for the "Shooting Star" sculpture, which will be installed near the entrance of the park. No donation is too big or too small. You can send a check to AGA, PO Box 335, Jacksonville, OR 97530 (please note on your check "Art in the Park-Shooting Star") or call Janis Mohr-Tipton at 541-846-7501.

Better yet, come meet the artist in person at the Cantrall Buckley Park Golden Jubilee on Saturday, July 14, from 12 - 7 pm.

At the Jubilee, be sure to visit the Park Enhancement Committee's exhibit to see pictures and stories from the park's beginnings in 1968. Find out what's happening now and what plans we have for the future. Get to know us and see if you'd like to join us to do great things for the betterment of the park and the enjoyment of park visitors. We welcome new suggestions too!

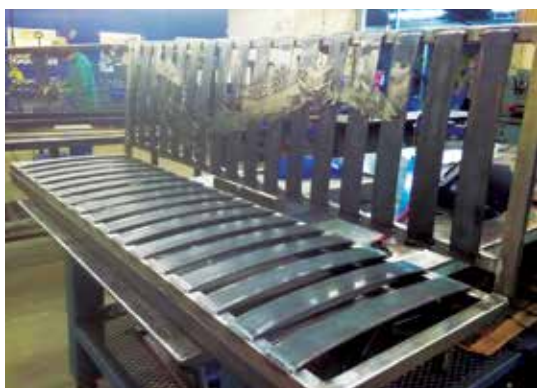
Artistic benches in the park

This art comes as beautifully designed and fabricated steel benches made by students in the metal fabrication program at Grants Pass High School. After visiting the facility and seeing the students in action, we were so impressed with the quality of work being done in their three-year program that we gave them the freedom to design and create three benches under the guidance of their instructor, Jake Leair.

Students chose different designs for each bench that would fit into the natural themes in our park. After being powder coated locally, they will be installed in the park.

Thank you to all the volunteers and donors. Come have some fun in your favorite park! I look forward to seeing you there.

Janis Mohr-Tipton
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Grants Pass High School students are making steel benches for installation at Cantrall Buckley Park.

Jewel of the Applegate: 50 years of Cantrall Buckley Park

BY TOM CARSTENS

We will be honoring Cantrall Buckley Park on its 50th anniversary this July. Here is a brief history of how it survived with pride throughout those years.

1961: In the beginning

The year is 1961. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has built a single-lane bridge over the Applegate River to replace an old ford on the Cantrall family cattle ranch. Neil Ledward, the first Jackson County Parks Director, begins to see the possibility of a county park on the other side. In 1965, Harlan Cantrall agrees to sell the county 25 acres on both sides of the river. Neighbor Lewis Buckley joins the fun and sells another eight acres—Cantrall Buckley Park is born. Soon after, the Ossenbrugges and the Dunlaps sell more acreage. With a BLM lease, the park now encompasses 54 acres.

takes a year, but the park finally reopens—this time better than ever.

Ledward continues to use the Jackson County Youth Work Corps. These kids, along with county work crews, turn the park into a showcase for the state. State



Bud Childers, second Park Ranger.



Neil Ledward, first Parks Director.

1965: Construction begins

Ledward spends the next three years transforming the heavily forested land into a park. There's a lot of work—the 1964 flood has devastated the flood plain. The area designated for the park is a big mess. All the earlier preparation work by the county has been obliterated. Downed trees and debris are everywhere.

To help clean it up, Ledward hires a bunch of Jackson County high-school boys, beginning a 30-year association with local kids. He believes that both the teenagers and the county would benefit from this concept of community service. He is right: these boys learn road construction, forestry, fire prevention, map reading, electrical, plumbing, irrigation, and riparian planting. They remove massive amounts of blackberries. Ledward teaches the boys to work around the big beautiful trees. (That's why we have such a cool, shady park today!)

1968: The park opens . . .

Slowly, but steadily, the park takes shape and opens on July 14, 1968, with a grand ceremony. Two years later, Cantrall sells the county another 34 acres. A campground is planned.

According to Ledward, Jackson County Parks "had more money than we knew what to do with." Ledward takes advantage and begins even more construction in the park: trails, an education gazebo, two ponds, a water feature, paved roads, a shelter, an irrigation system, a new restroom, and a playground. Through it all, Ledward constantly admonishes construction crews, "Keep the trees!"

The 70s: A tumultuous time

Bud Childers becomes the second park ranger in 1974. Right after, the Applegate River floods again, this time worse than in '64. Much of the previous work is destroyed. The approaches to the bridge are washed out. The park entrance is under water. Most of the new asphalt is ripped out. Park employees have to be rescued by boat.

On top of all that, the river has shifted! Childers has his work cut out for him. It

conventions take place at Cantrall Buckley so that other counties can learn how to build similar parks. Early work crews remember the park as "immaculate" and "pristine." Five hundred cars might show up on any given weekend.

But county timber payments supporting the park are drying up. The good times stop rolling. So, around 1976, Ledward begins the "Parks Enterprise Program"—an attempt to make the county park system function more like a business—more self-sufficient and less dependent on those disappearing timber payments. Gate receipts stay with the parks.

The 80s: Park budget gets the ax

The park flourishes, but with a reduced budget and reduced patronage. With the completion of the Applegate Dam, the floods stop, but the water released from the bottom of the dam is really cold. People cut back on swimming. Fishermen are happy, though. The trout love that cold water, and the salmon enjoy good water flows. More sites are added to the campground. Money continues to tighten in all county departments. County parks are placed under the Division of Public Works. Political infighting ensues.

The 90s: Transition

Neil Ledward retires in 1991 after 30 years as Jackson County Parks Director. Soon after, the county initiates wholesale changes to its park system. In a controversial decision, the parks department is placed under the county roads division. Timber sales continue to slacken. The county decides to preserve only a core of parks. Each county park undergoes a review.

Cantrall Buckley doesn't make the cut. The park is popular but earns little income outside of gate receipts. The park needs a lot of work, but there is no money in the coffers. In 1996, the county decides to shutter the gates. Embittered park employees describe the closure as heart-wrenching. Some of them lose their jobs. Bud Childers retires.

The community has no warning about losing their access to the Applegate River. Residents feel that the county has no idea how popular the park is. Ledward fights the closure from retirement—to no avail.

Jack Shipley, who has just founded the Applegate Partnership, decides to organize a contingent of Applegaters to water and mow the grass, pick up trash, clear downed wood, and basically keep the park in shape until they can figure out what to do.

The 1997 flood doesn't help. The park is hit hard once again, so neighbors come out in droves to help clean up. The Applegate Lions Club repairs all the picnic tables

See *JEWEL OF THE APPLGATE*, page 11.