

Kathryn Harrington

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 4 NEWS



METRO

PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

**Kathryn Harrington
represents**

**District 4, which
includes Northern
Washington
County, Cornelius,
Hillsboro, Forest
Grove, Northwest
Beaverton, Aloha,
Rock Creek, Bonny
Slope, Bethany,
Raleigh Hills, West
Slope, Cedar Mill
and Cedar Hills.**



Experience nature's wonder – Our own humanity requires it

“Get outside! Go play – and yes, get dirty!” Those are words that many of us heard as children, and which likely led to personal experiences with nature that we still remember to this day. We need to pass those words and their message on to every young person in our lives. That is one of the calls to action that I heard March 29, in attending two significant events with strong messages about the importance of nature to our lives. As adults, we need to keep interacting with nature for our own humanity and quality of life.

The first event was the dedication of the new wildlife center at our nearby Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge (located outside Sherwood, along TriMet bus line 12, Barbur Blvd. to Sherwood). The wildlife center and the refuge provide many wonderful opportunities to expose children and adults to Oregon's natural landscape.

The second event was an evening discussion program with Richard Louv, author of the national bestseller book *Last Child in the Woods* and a tireless advocate for the No Child Left Inside movement. Mr. Louv shared a clear directive: “Yes, we need more research, but we know enough to act!” Cognitive development for children and our everyday living, for adults and children alike, is greatly enhanced by exposure to nature. A child's long-term health and full use of senses can be directly linked to personal experience with nature, but the newest generations are at risk of never making the crucial, early connections with nature that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

As adults, we have a tremendous opportunity to act and have positive impact. The children of our families and our community need our help – they need a little adult engagement to start them on their personal journey with nature. It may be taking children on a walk to a park, a one-hour visit to see birds and trees at a local nature park, reserve or refuge (of which we are fortunate to have many of in our area), an overnight camping experience (available even at the Oregon Zoo), or just digging around in a backyard dirt pile (yes, it's as simple as digging a hole!). You know that institutions such as your regional government Metro, your city, your county, your local park district, our schools and their fabulous teachers will keep working hard to provide facilities and programs. But it is we adults who will make sure children take these opportunities, and appreciate the joy and wonder that come from simple times spent in natural areas.

I hope that you will help with the human connection part. Please, participate, experience and play in nature. Look under that rock or in that stream – some really cool worms and bugs and fish are just waiting to delight the child in each of us!

For more information on the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, visit www.fws.gov/tualatinriver. For information about a number of excellent natural areas in Washington County, visit this page on the web site of the Washington County Visitors Association: www.comeplayyourway.com/Discover/Article.aspx?id=3318.

— Kathryn Harrington

Celebrating Earth Day billboard artwork winners

Metro's 2008 Earth Day billboard art contest received more than 3,400 entries from students representing 94 schools in the region. On Saturday, April 5, Metro revealed the four winning and nine honorable mention designs during an unveiling ceremony and art show at the Metro Regional Center. Winners will have their artwork, name and the name of their teacher and school displayed on billboards posted throughout the region for Earth Day.



From District 4, Elaine Wan, fifth-grader at St. Mary of the Valley School in Beaverton, was one of the top four winners. Her poster will be displayed in April in Portland at Southwest Macadam Avenue, just north of Bancroft Street, facing south. In May, her poster will be displayed in Portland at Northeast Broadway Street, just east of Victoria Street, facing east. Another fifth-grader from St. Mary of the Valley, Emily Sunderland, won honorable mention for her poster. Connie Heger is the teacher for both students.

To see the full list of winners and the winning and honorable mention designs, visit www.metro-region.org/schoolrecycling or watch for the billboards at different locations throughout the metro region from April to June 2008.

Metro lays out work for the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan state component

The Metro Council adopted the federal component of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan update on December 13, 2007, to meet federal deadlines and planning requirements. Federal authorities approved the updated plan on February 29.

In April, Metro staff finalized a work plan for the state component of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan update. This will address population growth and state and regional goals for land use, transportation, the economy and the environment. The state component will be integrated with the federal component to create a final Regional Transportation Plan for public review and adoption late in 2009.

Metro staff will work closely with stakeholders and the public, throughout 2008 and 2009 to address funding gaps.

To keep abreast of project developments and opportunities to provide input, please see the project website at www.metro-region.org/rtp or write to Metro staff at rtp@metro.dst.or.us.

Household hazardous waste round-ups

Dispose of hazardous household waste at one of Metro's free regional household hazardous waste collection events held most every week until mid-November around the region. For more information on an event in your area, please visit the Metro website: www.metro-region.org/roundups.

Events in District 4

A walk on the wetlands at Jackson Bottom Wildlife Preserve

9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 17

The emphasis is on birds, but participants will have the opportunity to enjoy all of the natural world. The terrain is mostly flat, and the pace will be slow. Cost is \$3 per person. Advance registration required; call Hillsboro Parks and Recreation at 503-681-5397.

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About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy and good transportation choices for people and businesses in our region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges that cross those lines and affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to protecting open space, caring for parks, planning for the best use of land, managing garbage disposal and increasing recycling. Metro oversees world-class facilities such as the Oregon Zoo, which contributes to conservation and education, and the Oregon Convention Center, which benefits the region's economy.

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