



FRIENDS OF
Hendricks Park

NEWS FROM THE

Park Bench

EUGENE'S FIRST PARK

FALL 2011

Tenth Anniversary



Volunteers building
the Oak Knoll trail in
2003



Picnic tables lifted into
the Wilkins Shelter

Friends of Hendricks Park is celebrating its 10th year as a steward of the park. That means you have been getting this newsletter for 10 years. As with any anniversary, it is a time to reflect back, look forward and focus on the present.

What does it feel like for this nonprofit to be 10 years old? What are the Friends proud of? Ask a long-time board member—in fact, you could ask several, because four have been on the Friend's board since 2001. You might hear one of them say that we're here to stay, thanks to the local, loyal membership and its 10 years of faithful support. A nonprofit does not get

to be 10 without its members and volunteer help.

Another board member would reply that one of our great accomplishments is the attention that Friends of Hendricks Park has given to the forest and, specifically, to the Oak Knoll restoration. The project started with the construction of the Oak Knoll trail in 2003 with the help of a community grant from REI's community outreach program. Major restoration work occurred with the thinning of Douglas-firs to allow the white oaks on the Oak Knoll to develop. Work continues to remove invasive species and spread native seeds.

An interesting outcome of the Oak Knoll Project was the use of salvage logs from the forest thinning. Volunteers from the woodworking cooperative Splinters artfully made them into beautiful, one-of-a-kind picnic tables. The heavy fir tables were lifted into place in the Wilkins Shelter in 2009.

When board members recall the many undertakings that stand out over the years, the building of the Park Kiosk in

2004—with the addition of a new map of Hendricks Park the following year—are on the list. The kiosk keeps guard at the main parking lot and picnic area. Starting with a Neighborhood Grant from the City of Eugene and the skillful volunteer efforts of Rainbow Valley Design and Construction, the kiosk took shape on a cool Saturday in late November.



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Centennial banner in the Rhododendron Garden

Anniversary, *from page 1*

The Moon Terrace—the deck adjacent to the picnic shelter—was completed in 2004. The moon shape is a tribute to Mary Rear Blakely, for whom the Native Plant Garden (NPG) is dedicated. Funds to construct the Moon Terrace were donated as part of the NPG memorial.

The overlook area on the northern edge of the Rhododendron Garden was completed in 2007. From its memorial bench, the viewer can look down on the University of Oregon. The vista is a reminder of Thomas Hendricks' public spirit and high ideals, which led to his involvement with establishing the university.

No list would be complete without mentioning our community of volunteers. They come on Tuesdays to maintain the Rhododendron Garden and on Saturdays to pull ivy and other



(At left)
Experienced
volunteers
build the
kiosk

(Below)
Many hands
helped
complete the
Moon Terrace




Friends president, David Moon, proposing a toast on Moon Terrace

invasive species from the forest. In the fall, the board thanks the volunteers with an annual appreciation dinner in the shelter.

What generates so much interest in Hendricks Park? Neighbors use it for daily walks, events are held in the Wilkins Shelter and runners utilize the forest paths for workouts. The community pride and sense of place the park engenders leads our membership to faithfully continue supporting it for public use. Well, isn't that why it was set aside 100 years ago?

The Friends threw a party in 2006 for the Centennial Celebration to honor the founding father of Hendricks Park, Thomas Hendricks, and to celebrate the existence of this great, public park in our midst. As told by his granddaughter, Martha Goodrich, Thomas Hendricks "had a passion for the out of doors." The daily walkers in Hendricks Park and others who appreciate the wonders of nature would agree that Hendricks Park inspires such a passion.

Giving a voice to the park and its needs, the Friends represent neighbors and the community to relay concerns and ideas to the city's Parks and Open Space. Friends of Hendricks Park has worked hard during that time to maintain a successful public/private partnership, working on various projects to restore and maintain the park. The Friends use The Park Bench to connect with its members and the park's neighbors. The goal continues to be to maintain the park for the public and to keep people coming up to enjoy the Rhododendron Garden, Native Plant Garden and forest. Come see the rhododendrons in bloom in May or the early spring snowstorm when the witch hazel is fragrant with flowers. 

Bikes in the Park

Bicycles in Hendricks Park are allowed on paved roads only. Using bicycles on unpaved trails—though prohibited—still occurs and can cause significant trail damage, especially during the wet season.

When the Ribbon Trail was added to connect Hendricks Park to the Ridgeline Trail System, bicycling through the park trail system was open for discussion. At that time, POS and FoHP stood behind the Forest Management Plan, which allows bicycles only on paved roads. The trails in the park,

including the Ribbon Trail, are not built or maintained for bicycle usage.

In spite of signage, public information and discussion, bicycle use on unpaved trails is increasing and becoming a persistent problem. We feel strongly that the forest and trail system cannot be sustained with this kind of usage. Please educate your family, friends and cyclists regarding the fragility of the forest and trails. Soon, more visible signage will be used to mark the trails on which bicycle usage is prohibited.




‘Michael Robert’: Glorious!

Rhododendron ‘Michael Robert’ put on a spectacular show of blooms this year. The flowers are pink in bud, fading to cream and have a light fragrance. This lovely rho-



dodendron was created by Ray and Del James in 1947, in a cross between ‘Fawn’, another James hybrid, and a rhododendron named ‘Dot’. ‘Fawn x Dot’ was among more than 1200 plants the Jameses donated to the garden in the early 1960s so they could be enjoyed by more people.

On July 2, 2004, the previously unnamed hybrid was registered with the Royal Horticulture Society (the international registration authority for the genus *Rhododendron*) by the Study Group of the Eugene Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. Ron Friedland and Rich Aaring led the effort.

The rhododendron’s name—‘Michael Robert’—was chosen to honor Michael on the occasion of his retirement after 22 years of service as head gardener at Hendricks Park. 

Aunt Rhodie tells all...

Dear Aunt Rhodie: What is the difference between an azalea and a rhododendron?

Dear Reader:

You might as well ask, “When is a rhododendron an azalea?” Because botanically, rhodies and azaleas all belong to the genus *Rhododendron*. Botanists divide this large and varied genus into groups called series. One such series includes the plants we call azalea.

The series azalea contains most (but not all!) deciduous species and hybrids within the genus and also a group of low growing, evergreen plants with intensely colored flowers.

Azaleas have a number of features that distinguish them from the plants we call rhododendrons. The only one that is really useful to amateurs like us is the number of stamens, the slender flower parts that produce pollen.

While the plants we call rhododendrons mostly have 10 stamens or more, azaleas have 10 or fewer! Western azalea (*Rhododendron occidentale*), for instance, usually has five. The rule is not infallible, but it works most of the time.

Yours truly, Aunt Rhodie 

Send questions to:
Aunt Rhodie, Friends of Hendricks Park
P.O. Box 3784, Eugene, OR 97403
or call 607-4066 and leave a message.

Unofficial or “Rogue” Trails

One of the main goals for FoHP and Parks and Open Space this fall and winter is to address the unofficial or rogue trails that have appeared in the forested section of the park over the last few years. This problem was addressed about 7 years ago with help from park staff, who blocked the trails with green matter and posted educational signs to discourage visitors from trekking cross-country on unofficial trails. Once again, we have rogue trails—some new and some from the past.

“Throughout the forest, the unofficial trails create considerable ecological impacts such as soil compaction, exposed tree roots, erosion, drainage problems and damage to the sensitive areas of the forest floor,” says the Hendricks Park Forest Management Plan. These trails also can spread invasive species into the inner forest from shoes, clothing and pets.

Work on these unofficial trails started in late September. Nine employees from EWEB, eight from Datalogic and four from Oregon Medical Group started brushing out rogue trails that enter the forest from Fairmount. They also started building a wood fence along a turnout sec-



EWEB employee work party on the Day of Caring

tion of Fairmount that had two very compacted unofficial trails. The fence was finished on a regular Saturday forest work party in October. The Saturday volunteers also planted many native plants at the fence/trail site to help reestablish vegetation in the area. Visit the site, and notice the wooden fence complete with educational signage.

Work on the rogue trails will continue in partnership with Parks and Open Space and FoHP. A \$2,000 grant from FoHP will allow Northwest Youth Corp to help with the project. The trails will be blocked with fallen trees and brush, etc, and many native plants will be established on them.



Volunteer Spotlight: Harriet Kelly



Harriet with her largest stalked mushroom — a blue chanterelle

Harriet Kelly joined the Tuesday morning work group 4 years ago, one week after moving here from Chicago, where she was born and raised. She brought her enthusiasm and passion for gardening with her, and why not? She was a professional landscaper during the last 25 years she and her family lived in Chicago. When Harriet’s husband retired and their children moved north, east and west, John and Harriet decided westward to Eugene was where they wanted to go. Eugene had the social climate and suitable weather they were looking for. Harriet has landed happily, in part because her interest in mushrooming blew wide open during her first fall in Eugene. As with gardening, Harriet embraced mushroom hunting with gusto.

Any of the Tuesday morning regulars will tell you Harriet is fun to work with due to her ready smile and laughter. She can make a gloomy, chilly spring morning more entertaining.

One must remember, though, that Harriet blossoms into a mycological devotee every fall, and stalking unusual mushrooms takes precedence.



New and Renewing Friends of Hendricks Park

On behalf of the FoHP Board, thank you to the many people who contribute financially to our organization.
Your donation allows us to fulfill our mission with Hendricks Park.

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- Senior/student/limited income \$20
 Individual \$30
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ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS \$_____

- Forest restoration (i.e., ivy removal)
 Native Plant Garden
 Rhododendron Garden
 Unrestricted gift
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- Work parties
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Friends of Hendricks Park

P.O. Box 3784, Eugene OR 97403-0784

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P.O. Box 3784
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Hendricks Park**

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Volunteer Opportunities

Forest Work Parties

**Volunteer Forest Work Parties Fall 2011—
Spring 2012**

Saturdays: November 12, January 14, January 16 (Martin Luther King day of service), April 21 and June 9.

All work parties take place from 9 a.m. to noon, rain or shine.

Meet at the F.M. Wilkins Shelter at 2200 Summit Ave.

Wear appropriate clothes. Gloves, water and snacks provided. Information: 541-607-4066 or 541-343-3452.

Tuesday Morning Volunteers

Join this dedicated group to help maintain the Rhododendron Garden, have fun and share gardening skills. Meet at the park office at 9 a.m. each Tuesday through November 29. Volunteers return March 6, 2012.

