



WOODCOOKIE

a newsletter from Friends of Outdoor School



Fall 2022: As Told By Student Leaders

"I enjoyed Outdoor school and it taught me a lot about how to be a caretaker and teacher to kids." -Student Leader

"I worked with children better than I ever had. It was six days of wrangling them, teaching them about something that I had learned the weekend before, and making friends with them. There was a lot I learned. Whether that be new camp songs or how to build rapport with them. I'll be going back in the spring for sure. There's always more to learn. I made a lot of new friends, either student leaders, staff members or students." - Student Leader

"Hard work, loved fellow leaders, and though challenging, also was great and would like to do this again next year" -Student Leader

"I had a great time! I loved connecting with the 6th graders and getting to lead a cabin, teaching on field studies, and learning some new things about leadership and patience. I recommended this program to my friends, and I hope to be back in the spring!" - Student Leader

"At outdoor school this fall, I learned a lot about how I communicate with people of all ages. I learned about how I work as a leader, and how I can improve to accommodate peoples needs. I was able to self reflect on my leadership skills and build some confidence in my teaching abilities." - Student Leader

"Outdoor School was a rewarding and fulfilling experience for me. It made me feel more confident in my ability to teach, as well as being a leader in my community. Managing a cabin was exhausting, but it was definitely worth the struggle and I felt like I was making an impact on kid's lives. It was really wonderful to facilitate and introduction to nature for many students, some of whom had never hiked or had experience in the forest. I learned a lot of important and interesting information about plants and the natural sciences this week, and I feel more confident in my knowledge and more open to sharing it with others. It was also great to meet new people my age, all of them friendly, helpful and welcoming. Overall, Outdoor School was a great experience, though exhausting, and I expect to return." - Student Leader

"I learned a lot about myself as a whole, as well about plants (my field study). Going to outdoor school helped with my confidence and showed me how to collaboratively teach/work with others. Being outdoors all the time made me feel even more of a connection to nature and the world as a whole. I'm planning on going back next year." - Student Leader

"I never had to lead like this before and I've learned a lot about myself. I had an amazing time . I would love to go back in the spring." - Student Leader

"One of the hardest weeks of my life but super rewarding and I am very grateful for the experience. I learned a lot about myself and was pushed out of my comfort zone in the best way. I will be returning in the spring most definitely." - Student Leader

"My experience with outdoor school was absolutely incredible. I feel like I learned so much about others and myself. It had its challenges but it also had its amazing incredible moments that made it all worth it." - Student Leader

This fall, students were back at Outdoor School, many for overnight stays for the first time in several years. With the return of overnight Outdoor School comes the return of high school leaders teaching students, sharing meals, and helping students create cohesive cabin communities. Above are a handful of quotes from high school leaders about their Outdoor School experiences!



A Bridge to Outdoor School

Oregon’s Harney County had an Outdoor School problem. The problem was that seven of the nine remote rural schools in the county were not accessing state Outdoor School funds. When Sarah Cuddy at OSU Extension Outdoor School reached out to offer support, the challenge became clear. How do you offer Outdoor School when your area’s smallest school has only two students, and the largest has eleven?

That’s when Sarah began working with Harney ESD to create a pilot program for these remote schools called “Bridge to Outdoor School.” Since then, 50 students in grades K-8 have participated in virtual lessons and field based activities at

their school, leading up to multi-day trips to the coast and Hancock Field Station.

Collaboration on this innovative pilot created access to Outdoor School to students who were missing out. It also brought students together in exciting new ways. For the 7th grader whose only schoolmates were in 1st and 3rd grade, the excitement of working with another 7th grader on a science project made it well worth the effort. Look for a longer feature on Bridge to Outdoor School in a future newsletter, and thank you for supporting Friends of Outdoor School to advocate for state funding so that Harney County students can go to Outdoor School!



Legislators at ODS

In 2023, the Legislature will meet for a full session to consider a variety of bills and the budget for the next two years. A major priority for Friends of Outdoor School for the coming year is to once again secure full state funding for Outdoor School.

This fall we coordinated tours of Outdoor School for key legislators to see students learning first-hand. In the coming months we will build relationships with the incoming Governor and new legislators while also reminding returning legislators of the power of Outdoor School.

In partnership with the Oregon Department of Education, we are also exploring ways to gather and analyze data to evaluate the educational benefits of Outdoor School while ensuring the opportunity to fully participate for every Oregon student.

Raising your voices and the voices of students helps these elected officials make good decisions about supporting and championing Outdoor School.

Above photo: Senator-elect Suzanne Weber, Tillamook, learned about sea stars and sand dollars with Neahkahnne Middle School students at Twin Rocks Outdoor School.



Many thanks to our wonderful partners!

We are so excited to be a part of Wilamette Week's Give!Guide again this year and grateful to be working with so many wonderful partners.

When you give \$10 or more to Friends of Outdoor School through Give!Guide you will receive 60% off an XPH25R headlamp from our friends at COAST. Our friends at Vernier Science Education are also matching donations from donors 35 & under up to \$2,500. PLUS donors 35 & under will also receive an extra 25% off their order from COAST!

Our other partners include Tyler John Hartman who put on an incredible concert for us and has raised over \$1,000 for Friends of Outdoor School this past year. We're also so grateful to our friends at Milk Crate Kitchen, Ninkasi Brewing, and Union Wine Co. for providing delicious food and beverages at our recent concert. We would also like to thank the Native Arts & Cultures Foundation for hosting our concert in their event space, the Center for Native Arts & Cultures. Find Milk Crate Kitchen and the Native Arts & Cultures Foundation in Give!Guide.

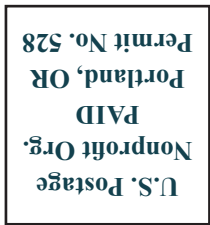


Board Spotlight: Mary T.

A valued member of the Friends of Outdoor School board, Mary Thomas is the interim principal at High Desert Middle School in Bend, Oregon. Before she became an administrator, she was a classroom teacher for 17 years, in a variety of subject areas and schools from independent to international, middle school to high school. As a fifth-generation Oregonian, Mary grew up loving and playing in the out of doors with her passion leading her to environmental education.

Before entering the classroom, she spent 10 years teaching around Oregon with various environmental education programs: OMSI, MESD, NW Regional ESD, Campfire, Caldera, etc. Her love of travel led her to teach overseas in Bali, Indonesia and become a board member with Ten Friends, a local non-profit based in Sisters, sponsoring Nepali students to become teachers. She is grateful for her family and Central Oregon community.

We're so grateful to have you on our board Mary!



Donate while you shop

Did you know that there are lots of ways to donate to Friends of Outdoor School while you shop this holiday season and beyond? Here are some easy ways to give whether you're in store or shopping online from your couch!

- Link your Fred Meyer's Rewards Card to your favorite nonprofit without losing any points. When you use your Rewards Card when shopping at Freddy's, you will be helping Friends of ODS earn a donation from Fred Meyer. Sign up at <http://bit.ly/3OAUjXm>
- Shopping on Amazon? Designate Friends of Outdoor School as your preferred nonprofit on your Amazon Smile account and 0.5% of eligible purchases will be donated to us! Sign up here: <https://bit.ly/FODSSmile>
- You can donate with every purchase when you use Round 4 Good! Learn more at: <https://bit.ly/Round4Good>

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