

The Power of One

The Oregon Environmental Council connects the personal to policy. That is, we serve as a resource for individuals to make personal choices that protect and improve their quality of life, and we are a catalyst for broader changes and state-wide policies that protect us all.

Working in this capacity over the years, OEC staffers have met many remarkable Oregonians who work every day to make our state a better place to live. These people, most of whom will never be publicly recognized for their contributions, are among the most precious of Oregon's great resources. Some, like Larry Williams (see pg. 7), have helped set the course of environmental history in Oregon. Others are new to Oregon, like jazz star Devin Phillips (see pg. 6). All of these people help make Oregon the unique place we love.

Being reminded of just how much positive change one person can create is constantly renewing and inspiring to OEC's staff. In this issue, we aim to share a few of these stories with you and hope that you will be inspired as well.

Do you know of an inspiring story you'd like to tell us? Log on to oeconline.org/stories to share it!

Nurturing Children and Community: The Story of One Remarkable Eco-Healthy Childcare Provider

As a childcare provider for the past decade, Regina Martinez has become an expert in many things. Some of them were expected: child development, literacy tools, nutrition, and facility maintenance. Others, such as protecting children from toxins in the environment,

the welfare system, domestic violence issues, and laws relating to migrant workers, were thrust upon her as she realized that the role of a childcare provider can be more than that of a baby sitter; it can be an instrumental element of community support and change.

Regina's commitment to her community runs deep. It begins in her home in Ontario, Oregon where she has run the Martinez Daycare for more than five years. The success of her daycare recently resulted in the opening of a second facility, the Pumpkin

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A youngster at Rowanberry School thrills at the harvest of the year's first beans. Rowanberry is an Eco-Healthy qualified childcare facility. For more, turn to page 2.

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Patch Preschool. Both facilities offer bilingual education and are qualified by the Oregon Environmental Council as Eco-Healthy. As part of her commitment to her community, she offers a reduced rate for migrant worker families and leaves her doors open 24 hours. "I've always wanted to give back to the Hispanic community," Regina explains. "These people work 12-15 hours a day and make \$10-15. I want them to have access to childcare where they know their children are being fed and educated. Obviously, I'm not in it for the money."

Regina is driven by a strong desire to protect and nurture the children in her care as well as the broader community. These values, which made her childcare facilities such a natural fit for the Eco-Healthy Childcare program, also drive her to offer more than just daycare for children. The services Regina provides are vital to many families in the area who are struggling financially. "We have become more than a childcare to this community. We are a resource and run programs to swap used clothing and toys. If someone needs food, I'll go to my pantry and make a food basket. The thing is, not only are you helping by being a resource, but we are helping individuals become productive members of the community."

Recognizing a large disparity between the incomes of Oregon childcare providers compared to providers in other states, in 2005 Regina became involved with an effort to unionize childcare providers. Under the moniker

"Child Care Providers Together," Regina, along with 19 other providers, was elected by 4,800 fellow childcare providers to negotiate a basic bill of rights for childcare providers and increased pay.

On September 30, 2006, Regina's goals for childcare providers were realized and Governor Ted Kulongoski signed a contract with Child Care Providers Together, which were represented by their union, the AFSCME. This contract resulted in the unionization of childcare providers, a substantial increase in the state-paid subsidy for low-income families, and a lowering of co-payments for low-income families. The increase in support for low-income families raises Oregon's subsidy rank from last to 18th nationally.

"This achievement empowers me and makes me feel like a professional. When you are treated like a professional, you strive to be better," says Regina.

Beginning in her home and ending on the capitol steps, Regina chooses to initiate and propel positive change in every sphere of her life. In 2006, Regina was recognized as the Malheur County Child Care Provider of the Year. This award was one of the many appreciations given to Regina over the years, but it is of special importance. "To be recognized as more than a glorified babysitter, but as a business owner and someone who helps the community. That is what is important to me."

— Sara Leverette



In September, childcare providers became union members of the AFSCME. Regina Martinez (2nd from left) joined Governor Kulongoski and others in celebration.

Look for this icon throughout this issue of *One Oregon One Environment*. We're highlighting ways in which the personal actions Oregonians can take to protect our environment connect with broader community changes and even statewide policies that protect us all.



Eco-Healthy Childcare Program Highlights

It's well documented that many illnesses (e.g., asthma, birth defects, learning disabilities, neurological problems and some childhood cancers) are linked to pollution and products we use every day. Children are particularly at risk, in part because their bodies and organs are still developing. Several of these illnesses have increased at alarming rates in recent years and are of unique concern to the Oregon Environmental Council because they are preventable. A 2002 study estimated that the annual price tag for environmentally attributable diseases suffered by American children totals \$54.9 billion. OEC is working hard to reduce these numbers in Oregon through programs like Eco-Healthy Childcare.

The Eco-Healthy Childcare program is a nationally recognized effort that provides assistance and training to childcare providers on reducing exposure to toxins, while creating a market demand for these providers.

Potential sources of toxins in and around childcare centers include lead in drinking water and old paint, pesticides used on lawns or inside buildings, mold, poor indoor air, cleaning products, mercury-containing products, and vehicle exhaust created while parents idle their cars waiting for their kids.

Providers increasingly report receiving phone calls from parents seeking eco-healthy childcares. Approximately 500 parents a month visit our website looking for qualified providers.

As of the printing of this newsletter, 114 facilities serving over 2,900 children are benefiting from the Eco-Healthy Childcare program. Materials are available in both English and Spanish.

To qualify your childcare or to encourage your child's daycare to qualify, visit oeonline.org/teachers or call Sara Leverette at (503) 222-1963 ext. 105.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Spring has sprung, and Oregon gardeners are itching to get outside. The way you care for your yard can impact your health and the health of our environment. Here are a few tips for an eco-healthy yard.

Skip the “Weed and Feed”

Lawns can look great without chemicals. Weed and Feed products contain herbicides and chemical fertilizers blended together. This can be wasteful, applying unneeded chemicals to the entire lawn. When garden chemicals are overused, they can run off into rivers, streams and lakes. This pollution can affect the health of fish and other aquatic life. Long-term exposure to low levels of pesticides can also impact human health, especially for children. Maintaining a healthy lawn is the best way to combat weeds, diseases and pests.

To keep your lawn healthy, apply a thin layer of compost in the spring and fall, and water gently to wash the nutrients and microbes into the soil.

When you mow your lawn, aim for a height of three inches. This is the ideal growth height for the grasses most people grow.

Leave your grass clippings on the lawn so their nutrients can feed it.

Pull weeds when they first appear to keep them from spreading. This saves time and energy, and reduces the use of chemicals.

For more healthy lawn tips, visit www.healthylawns.org.

Go native

If you're ready to make some changes this year, try replacing some of your lawn with native plants. Natural landscaping saves you time and money because native plants need less watering and fewer chemicals, and they are resistant to pests and diseases. Natural landscaping also attracts birds, butterflies and beneficial wildlife to your yard, reduces erosion and protects water



quality. To find out about native plants in your part of the state, visit www.plantnative.org.

Get help

If you're not a do-it-yourselfer, you can hire a landscaping professional with eco-healthy credentials. OEC is partnering with local governments in the Portland metro area to certify the first group of landscaping companies in the Ecological Business program. Coming this summer; when you visit www.ecobiz.org, you will find a list of ecologically certified landscaping professionals. When you need to hire a professional for landscape design, installation, maintenance or irrigation, EcoBiz takes the guesswork out of choosing someone who will do the job in a way that's healthy for you and the environment.

If you or someone you know runs a landscaping business that would be a good candidate for the free EcoBiz certification program, call OEC's Program Director for Clean Rivers Teresa Huntsinger at (503) 222-1963 ext. 112. The certification checklist and a guidebook to environmentally responsible landscaping are available online at www.ecobiz.org. Certified businesses benefit by receiving free advertising and third-party recognition as leaders in their field.

– Teresa Huntsinger



Extraordinary Volunteers

Even with the growth of OEC's talented, dedicated staff, we continue to find that there is more great work to do here than is possible for 16 people to accomplish. (It's common around the office for us to joke with Program Director Sallie Schullinger-Krause, who runs our Global Warming programs, "Are you finished with that global warming work, Sallie? Got it solved?")

So, in the proud 38-year tradition of this organization, we look to talented, dedicated volunteers to help us safeguard what we all love best about Oregon. Just as they have always done at OEC, volunteers today fill a number of vital roles in the organization, from getting the word out about us to helping guide the organization as a whole.

Caran Goodall, former AmeriCorps member with OEC, recently told us a great story about how OEC volunteer work came full circle for her. Caran helped set up OEC's community outreach program, bringing OEC information and materials to communities around the state by tabling at fairs, festivals and community gatherings. Caran also works part time at Metro's hazardous waste collection sites. A few weeks ago, Caran met an enthusiastic mom who had come to a collection site in Lake Oswego after having an epiphany about household toxics. Just hours before, the mom had attended "Baby Fest, Kid Fest, Camp Fest" and talked with OEC volunteers there about how to create a safer, toxic-free home for kids. She immediately went home to apply that knowledge and took those unwanted toxins to the appropriate place!



Thank you to outgoing board members (from left) Carl Lamb and Peter Bloome, and welcome to Bill Boggess and Bill Edmonds!

New Faces On the OEC Board

We want to acknowledge two outgoing members of our volunteer board, Peter Bloome and Carl Lamb. Peter and Carl served on the board for six years. Both have been key in leading OEC to its present position of growth, and they will be missed.

OEC is pleased to welcome Bill Boggess and Bill Edmonds to our board in April. **Bill Boggess** serves as Executive Associate Dean of OSU's College of Agricultural Sciences. He has 23 years of experience in the field of agriculture, food and resource economics. Bill received both his B.S. in Agricultural Business and his Ph.D. in Economics from Iowa State University. Since 2003, he has served on the Oregon Governor's Council of Economic Advisors.

Bill Edmonds is the Director of Environmental Policy & Sustainability at NW Natural. His background is in the field of energy and environmental policy. He formerly chaired The Climate Trust, a nonprofit with the mission of implementing projects to reduce greenhouse gases. Bill has a B.A. in Political Science from Williams College and an M.P.P. from the University of California at Berkeley.

Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who make OEC's work possible! Looking for ways to get involved yourself? Visit oeconline.org/about/volunteer.

Many Thanks to Our Outstanding Volunteer Board of Directors

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Cleaner Rivers for Oregon: Why Our Rivers Need Our Help

“Most Oregonians have heard about the Willamette River’s pollution problems, but they are not aware that every major river in Oregon violates Clean Water Act standards,” said Teresa Huntsinger, the Oregon Environmental Council’s program director for clean rivers.

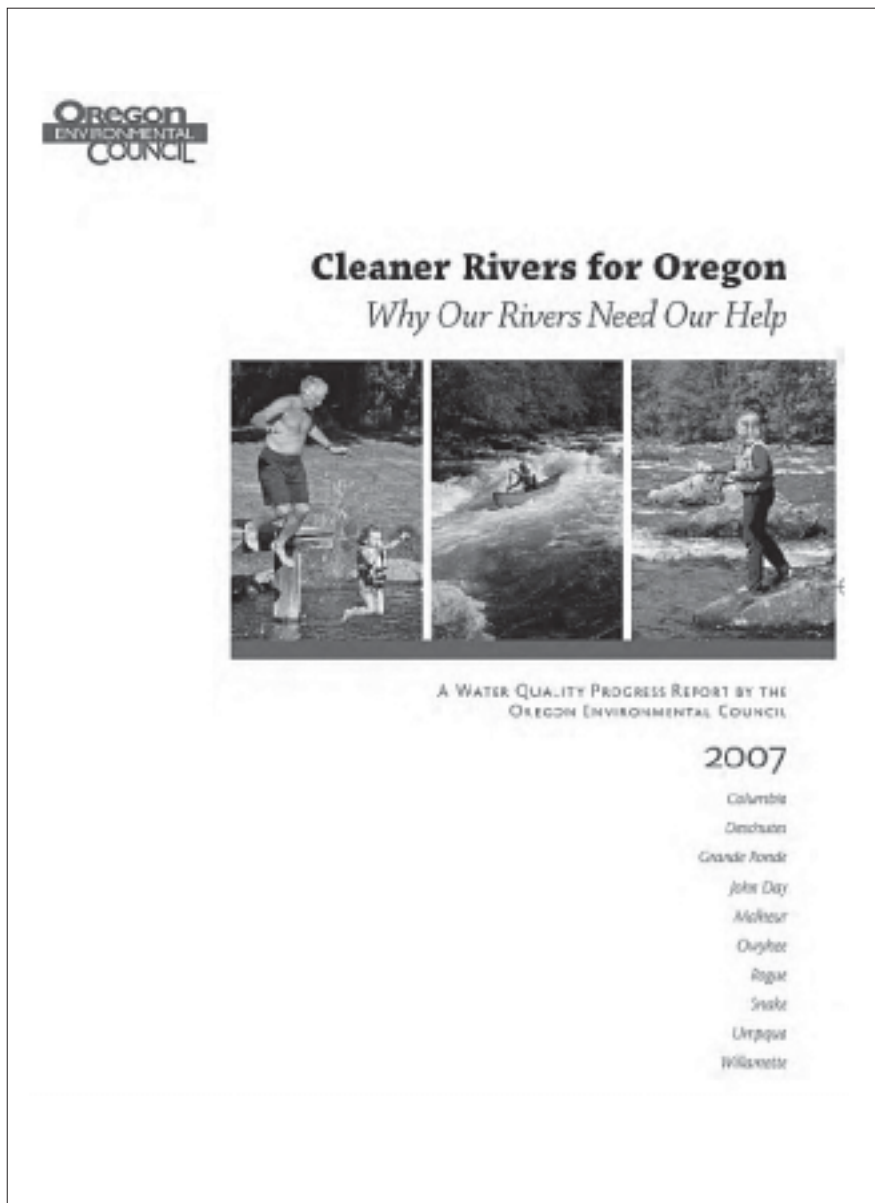
Teresa knows this fact all too well, having authored a report OEC released in April, “Cleaner Rivers for Oregon: Why Our Rivers Need Our Help.” The 32-page report, the first water quality survey of the state’s 10 major rivers, seeks to make information about the health of our rivers more accessible to Oregonians. Based on water quality information compiled biannually by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, the report shares real life stories of Oregonians implementing solutions particular to their own watershed. The report also provides information for Oregonians who want to know how their local river is doing, useful tips for river-friendly living, and resources to help people get involved in efforts to clean up our rivers.

Since every square mile of the state is part of a watershed, the health of Oregon’s rivers and its people are intrinsically linked. By educating people about the pollutants that are impacting our rivers, and about the positive steps that can be and are being taken to clean them up, OEC seeks to find solutions and enable Oregon’s citizens to take action.

“We need to pay close attention to the health of our rivers,” said Teresa, “and there is a lot that people in both rural and urban areas can do to help, including encouraging our elected officials to invest in water quality protection and stream restoration efforts.” For tips and information about contacting your elected officials, visit oeconline.org/salem/citizenguide.



– Jeremy Graybill



For a complete copy of the report, visit oeconline.org/rivers or call (503) 222-1963 ext. 100.

Wading in the Water: Saxophonist Devin Phillips

As Devin Phillips breathes the first hypnotic notes of the evening through his unburnished soprano saxophone, a pair of obscured bodies rise from the cabaret tables and begin to dance. The drums come in, then the percolating snaps of an irresistibly funky bass, and the quintet is off and running. Heads bob. More dancers rise. Ice cubes rattle in drinks amid hoots and chatter from the audience as Phillips unleashes a serpentine, roiling solo. The atmosphere is unmistakably funky New Orleans, home-cooked by the latest up-and-comer in a century-old tradition of Crescent City musicians. But it's not New Orleans. It's 2,500 miles away in Portland, Oregon.

Phillips evacuated New Orleans two years ago, days before Hurricane Katrina tore through the Gulf states and shattered his home town, leaving a city ravaged and its artists scattered on its winds. "It's just luck I'm in Portland. Fate," he says. "I evacuated to Shreveport, and came to realize how bad it was back in New Orleans. I knew I had to make a decision, and make one soon."

That's when a fortuitous ad for the Portland Jazz Festival's NOLA2PDX initiative to support and relocate displaced musicians caught his eye. "I was

on WWOZ's website (New Orleans's famous public radio station), and there it was. I picked up the phone." The rest is his history – in the making.

Since relocating to Portland, he's organized two outstanding groups: New Orleans Straight Ahead and the Devin Phillips Band, and released his first album *Devin Phillips: Wade in the Water*. "My career has really begun to excel here," he smiles. But Phillips dismisses the obvious divergence between the jazz scenes of Oregon and his hometown, the birthplace of jazz. "An artist, a true artist, will live anywhere. For me though, I was lucky enough to find a place where I could be truly effective and I love it here."

But that doesn't mean New Orleans, or what transpired in its aftermath, is ever far from his mind. "I've been back four times in the last year, and it's funny, but I miss it the most when I go back. Firstly I am a musician and a New Orleanian – I'm not political, nor am I a patriotic person, but the only good thing I saw coming out of Katrina was Americans helping Americans. Not FEMA or the government ignoring people. Ordinary people were helping each other out."

And if you want to help, he says, that's how. "New Orleans needs help on so many levels – and anything anybody can do to help is needed. If you're an educator, you can teach. If you're a roofer, you can build. The government is not putting tools in the hands of those who really want to help."

Indeed, his anger and sadness have left an indelible mark on his art. Even tonight, as he blows another solo with his hip-breakingly funky Devin Phillips Band, working the gathering crowd into a delirious frenzy, there's something intangible just under the surface. "Every time I'm up there playing, and you hear me play the blues," he smiles, "that's the lack of FEMA. That's the FEMA trailers. It's

the ridiculous lack of progress. That's all in my sound."

For more information about Devin Phillips, his new CD *Devin Phillips: Wade in the Water*, and his upcoming performance schedule, visit www.devinphillips.com.

– Jeremy Graybill



courtesy of Andrew Burdick (andrewburdickphotography.com)

Visiting New Orleans

The US Climate Action Network (USCAN) met in New Orleans recently on global warming. OEC's own Sallie Schullinger-Krause made the trip south to participate. New Orleans was chosen for very specific reasons.

In a recent report of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), scientists state that global warming is predicted, with high confidence, to result in continual sea level rise and warming. The outcomes for these changes include massive flooding and stronger storms, like Hurricane Katrina.

Visiting New Orleans left a lasting impact on Sallie. She returned to Portland with dramatic stories of the devastation she witnessed, as well as the indomitable spirit of New Orleanians who are working hard to rebuild.

One of the best ways to help this great American city recover is to travel there to sample the unparalleled music and food that made the Crescent City famous. Savory Louisiana cooking and the peerless sounds of local and international musicians will win your heart and rejuvenate your spirit, just as your visit will help rejuvenate the city.

For news on OEC's global warming strategies, what you can do, and resources for visiting New Orleans, visit oeconline.org/climate.



A Visit from an Oregon Environmental Visionary

Soft-spoken and unassuming, Larry Williams hardly seems like a celebrity. But to the group of dedicated OEFC staffers gathered in the conference room in March, he certainly held celebrity status.

If Williams isn't a household name in Oregon, it's not for the lack of impact of his work. As one of the founders of the Oregon Environmental Council nearly forty years ago and the organization's first Executive Director, Williams describes himself as "the first full-time environmentalist in Oregon." He led our organization in a time of watershed environmental victories, many of which put Oregon on the map as a state full of environmental visionaries. He and his dedicated staff – most of whom were volunteers – laid the groundwork for many of the initiatives that are still alive today, such as the Oregon League of Environmental Voters (now known as the Oregon League of Conservation Voters or OLCV) and the recycling hotline now run by Metro.

We're immensely proud of this legacy as well as the fact that we feel the same sense of passion for keeping Oregon clean and healthy that drove OEFC's founders to create this organization nearly 40 years ago. Thank you, Larry, for reminding us of our roots!

– Adrienne Kringen



Renee & Jeremy

Meet Renee and Jeremy!

High-fives were definitely in order when Renee Hackmiller-Paradis and Jeremy Graybill joined OEFC staff in February.

Renee is our new Program Director for Environmental Health. Renee promotes policies and projects that protect kids' health from toxic pollution, and strengthens our collaborative

relationships with health professionals. For 10 years, she worked as a researcher in the areas of immunology, cell and developmental biology at the University of

Chicago and OHSU. Just prior to joining OEFC, Renee worked with the Oregon Department of Human Services' Alliance Working for Antibiotic Resistance Education. Renee has a B.S. in Cell and Molecular Biology, a Ph.D. in Genetics, and an M.P.H. in Health Management and Policy.

As Communications Director, **Jeremy** is involved in all of our programs. His focus is on improving OEFC's out-reach to all Oregonians via our web site and getting OEFC in the news. Jeremy received his B.A. in English, at the University of California, Berkeley.

His eight years of experience in public relations include Marketing Communications Specialist for the Columbia Credit Union; Public Relations Associate and Web Marketing Coordinator for the Portland Art Museum; Marketing Coordinator for Coldwell Banker; and Business Media Editor for Business Wire in San Francisco. He volunteers as a Public Relations Consultant for the "I Have a Dream Foundation" in Portland.

Welcome, Jeremy and Renee!

– Cheryl Bristah



OEFC's founder Larry Williams inspired our staff with stories of OEFC's beginnings. Back row from left: Jeremy Graybill, Kevin Considine, Sallie Schullinger-Krause, Allison Hensey, Andrea Durbin, Larry Williams, Teresa Huntsinger. Bottom row: Sara Leverette, Chris Hagerbaumer, Adrienne Kringen.

Be Evergreen!

One of the most valuable ways you can support OEC – and work such as our river report (see pg. 5) or Eco-HealthyChildcare Program (see cover page) – is by signing up for our “Evergreen Society.” No more renewal notices; just a monthly electronic transfer to OEC from your checking account of whatever amount you wish to give! It helps the environment by

saving paper; it helps OEC by saving postage; and it helps simplify your life by making your contribution a regular and automatic part of your monthly finances. To sign up, just send us a voided check and a note indicating how much you'd like to give. It's that simple! (We'll make sure you still get your issue of *One Oregon One Environment*.)



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