



# OPAL CREEK ANCIENT FOREST CENTER

*Flowing Through Generations*



Program Coordinator Kaola Swanson helps some of our youngest students identify a sampling of our local insect species.

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## Family Fun at Jawbone Flats

by Kaola Swanson, Program Coordinator

The rush of giggles and multiple kids less than 4 feet tall can only mean one thing: there is a Family Workshop taking place in Jawbone Flats. One of the things I appreciate as a teacher in this incredible outdoor classroom is the diversity of subject matter and student background. We have classes from all over the state, from elementary school students to retirees in hiking clubs. Sometimes we focus on the stream systems, other days we spend differentiating lichens and mosses, and sometimes we lie in the meadow and watch bats and night hawks hunt.

Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center provides several avenues for families to investigate and experience the forest together. We host workshops throughout the season that are guar-

anteed to engage all age groups and interest levels. Insects, Wildflowers & Butterflies, Amphibians, and Harvest weekend are all fantastic choices. Opal Creek Expeditions includes a Family Backpacking opportunity to get into the heart of this magnificent wilderness area. If you and yours just want a weekend retreat, we also rent out four of our comfortable riverside cabins.

Our family workshops are a great introduction for adults and kids of all ages to the ancient forest and the creatures that inhabit it. The small stature of the young kids contrasted against the massive old trees is always fun to see. Their curiosity abounds as they duck and climb through the forest. Because they are closer to the ground, they find more macro invertebrates, salamanders, berries, and fungus than any other group. And I love that the parents of these small learners are

relaxed enough to let them run free and burn off energy here in the forest without worrying that they might come back with wet shoes and dirt on their jeans. This is the place to immerse yourself, no matter what your age, in the world around you.

Some of the strongest bonds are formed during challenging times. Our Family Backpacking trip this year turned out to be more challenging than anticipated; it rained the entire weekend. Although conditions were less than ideal, the two families that braved the weather left with fond memories, stronger legs, and a mutual appreciation of hot chocolate, popcorn, and the power of encouragement. You will remember the hills you climb, the vistas on top of them and the soundness of your sleep after stargazing on Beachie Saddle for years to come. We hope for better weather in

*continued on page 4*

# From the Executive Director

# Team Effort

**Departing Opal Creek permanently is impossible;** something compelling always draws you back. As a kid I grew up here, in the late 60s I introduced my U of O friends to Jawbone Flats, in the 1970s I was President of Shiny Rock Mining Corp. and now years later I've had the opportunity to be the Executive Director of Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center. Recognizing it is time to pass the baton again and promote from within we have structured a very organized transition of duties and responsibilities to Katie Ryan, who is on a path to become the new Executive Director by February 1, 2010.

During my three-year command at the helm we have accomplished much as a team:

- The Commissary was completely rebuilt into a very functional classroom, laboratory and flexible meeting space.
- Our accounting system and member database were put on-line so our staff could input information and create reports from multiple locations.
- Thanks to David Seidman an Opal Creek newt made the cover of Audubon Magazine and this prompted coverage by every large newspaper in Oregon plus OPB's Oregon Field Guide.
- Six new Board Members added depth, expertise and enthusiasm.
- Individual and Board financial donations doubled.
- Earned program revenue increased 43% and has a strong future to help support the organization.
- Opal Creek Expeditions was launched into the Bull of the Woods Wilderness with the support of the USFS Estacada Ranger District.
- A new Pelton wheel added 80% more electrical power using the same amount of water.
- The revamped website provides information and data that is valuable to our members and the general public wishing to visit our unique watershed.
- The Bill Healy Foundation provided the second largest grant ever received by our organization supplying the bulk of funds to start the new utility building construction. The Collins and Juan Young Foundations also contributed. Additional funds are sought to complete the remaining indoor detail over the winter.
- An additional sand filter septic system was installed at Jawbone Flats protecting our local ecosystem and the stream.
- We are retaining and promoting more staff from within the organization.

- The Horn Ranch was sold and the office leased back thanks to Rick and Sharon Schaeffer stepping in at a timely moment.
- Through deft management by the Finance Committee we got through a particularly difficult time to continue our mission.

All the accomplishments I just listed were the result of Board and staff winnowing ideas, concentrating on the issues at hand, applying hard work and believing in our mission.

I thank the entire Board for their patience and guidance particularly Thor Hinckley, our immediate past chair and incoming Chair Adam Lane. This is a very hardworking and active Board that puts in countless volunteer hours, not to mention financial contributions.

A final thanks goes to my wife Leslie who has been both an "Opal Creek widow" and constant supporter with invaluable volunteer spirit.

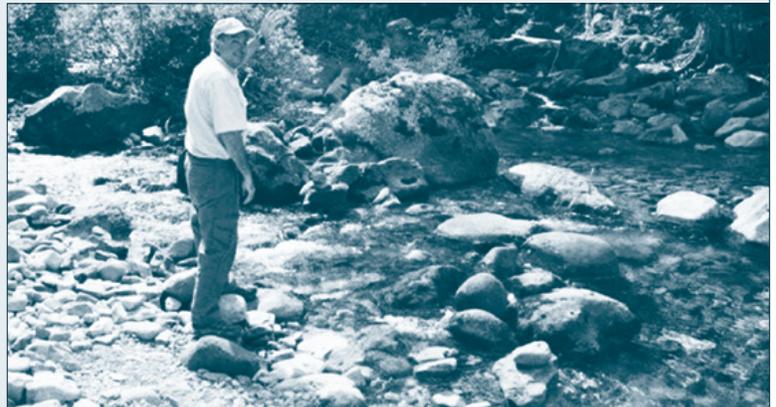
After taking a few months away from Opal Creek I plan to offer my services to the Board and resume a role of advice and guidance and happily put the administrative tasks into Katie's very capable hands. You may have noticed that as I transferred duties to her I have been making calls to members thanking you for your support of Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center and of course asking for your continued financial investment.

Happy Trails



Tom Atiyeh

*The confluence of Battle Ax and Opal Creek is where these two great streams meet to form the Little North Fork of the Santiam. With the confluence of Board, staff and members' team efforts we continued to build a successful Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center.*



## STAFF

Tom Atiyeh  
*Executive Director*

Joe O'Neill  
*Facilities Director*

Kaola Swanson  
*Program Coordinator*

Katie Chipko  
*Science Instructor*

Kathy Rivera  
*Office Manager*

Ben Yates  
*Assistant Cook*

Bobby Cressman  
*Science Instructor*

Jonathan Ross  
*Facilities Director  
Apprentice*

Rebekah Yglesias  
*Food Service Director*

Jennie Fuller  
*Science Instructor*

Katie Ryan  
*Program Director*

Kristina Oldani  
*Registrar*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Adam Lane  
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Ted Helprin

Heidi Hu  
*Co-Vice Chair*

Thor Hinckley

Rick Schaeffer  
*Co-Vice Chair*

Josh Kling

Greg Meenahan

Craig Jacobson  
*Secretary*

Liam Sherlock

Dave Taylor  
*Treasurer*

Sean Sullivan

## MISSION

*Promoting ancient forest stewardship through educational experiences inspired by Opal Creek's natural and cultural history.*



**Ben and Rebekah  
prepare a hearty  
and healthy meal  
using local  
produce for our  
guests.**

## From The Jawbone Flats Kitchen

by Rebekah Yglesias, Food Service Director

**I**t's nostalgic, standing in the lodge kitchen mixing up something I first made back when JFK was President.

When granola hit the scene with yogurt, coffee houses, and the PEACE movement, the word was on everyone's tongue. It was real food, the nutritious, unprocessed, anti-establishment cereal sensation of the Hippie Sixties. Anyone could make it, any way they liked it. We carried it in our pockets, ate it at all hours.

Plus, it was cool to say. **G R A N O L A.**

Sylvester Graham, the 18th century Health Nut, Vegetarian Preacher from Connecticut who is credited with the first crunchy baked bran cereal he named Granula, hoped he would revolutionize the declining trends of the American diet. We strive to provide our hungry hikers with wholesome and complete nourishment, making most items served in our kitchen from scratch using local and organic ingredients when possible.

Today our homemade granola is a staple of the Jawbone Flats kitchen. If you have visited recently, and had a chance to sample some you know why. Like most everything, it is as good as what you put into it.

Both the below recipes can be converted to gluten free by the flour you use and substituting flax or nut meal for the wheat germ. We like to slow toast our granola to a light "milk chocolate" color. This makes it crunchier and less prone to clump or mold.

We hope these wholesome recipes can help nourish you on your next wilderness adventures, at Opal Creek or beyond. Be sure to reserve your place in a workshop, Opal Creek Expedition, school program, or rent a cabin to experience the pristine peace of Opal Creek's ancient forest while enjoying our politically free, historically appreciative, nutritious Jawbone Granola and Nutter Bars.

## Half Gallon of Jawbone Granola

- Preheat oven to 250 degrees
- Whirl together in a large bowl:
  - 9 c thick cut rolled oats
  - 4½ c assorted nuts (almonds, walnuts, peanuts, pecans, brazil, etc.)
  - 1½ c assorted seeds (sunflower, pumpkin, flax, chia, etc.)
  - ¾ c flour (can use any kind here – wheat, soy, almond, brown rice, spelt, etc.)
  - 1½ c wheat germ (flax meal, almond meal also works)
  - 1¼ c sesame seeds
- Heat in large saucepan on low heat until blended:
  - 1½ c oil (I like grapeseed)
  - 1½ c honey (can use mixture of agave, maple syrup, etc.)
  - 2¼ teaspoon vanilla
  - 1½ teaspoon cinnamon
  - ½ teaspoon nutmeg
  - ½ teaspoon sea salt

Pour wet ingredients into dry. Blend until evenly coated. Lightly oil or parchment paper cookie sheets or baking pans. Bake in shallow layer 1½ – 2 hours, stirring occasionally, until browned. Allow to cool. Now add 1 – 1½ c assorted fruit (use mixture of dried raisins, cranberries, blueberries, chopped dates, cherries, mango, pineapple, apples, etc.) Store in air tight container in cool place. Can be refrigerated or frozen and warmed to crisp.

*If you joined us on any of our Opal Creek Expeditions this year, you were treated to our homemade granola bars for quick energy while on the trail.*

## Nutter Granola Bars

\*not vegan

Yields 10-12 bars

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Lightly oil 8 inch square pan
- Cream together:
  - ¾ c peanut or almond butter
  - ¼ grape seed oil or good vegetable oil
- Add to creamed mixture:
  - ⅓ c demerara or turbinado, course raw cane sugar
  - 1 egg
  - ¼ c water
  - 2 teaspoons vanilla
- Stir in:
  - ½ c flour (all kinds – unbleached, wheat, soy, almond, brown rice, spelt, etc.)
  - 2½ c Jawbone granola
- Optional – add ½ c each (up to 1½ c total):
  - Chocolate chips (we think a must-have);
  - Raisins, Cranberries, Nuts

Spread in prepared pan, bake 30 minutes until golden. Cool and remove from pan. Slice into bars right away or wrap whole to refrigerate or freeze. Optional: After cooling, slice into bars and double back on light sprayed cookie sheet or with parchment paper at 200 degrees for 10 minutes. Turn off oven and leave them in to set up as oven cools. This makes them less chewy, less prone to mold and crumble. When completely cooled, wrap individually to preserve flavor and texture.

# COMINGS and GOINGS

**A**s mentioned in the Executive Director's letter, Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center is in the middle of transitioning the Executive Director position from **Tom Atiyeh** to our current Program Director, **Katie Ryan**. Tom and Katie are currently working through a detailed transition plan. Katie has designed and managed Opal Creek's programs since the March of 2005 and is excited to take on this next challenge. She brings 10 years of experience developing, teaching, and overseeing outdoor education programs throughout the west.

The Executive Director transition requires that Katie be based in an area with a phone, consistent internet, and generally more accessible than life in Jawbone Flats allows for. After 3 years in Cabin 6, **Katie Ryan** and

**Joe O'Neill** will be moving their permanent residence to Bend, OR. Joe has worked in our Facilities Department for three years, the last year serving as our Facilities Director. We are extremely grateful to Joe for the blood, sweat and tears he gave to Jawbone over the years. Thankfully Joe isn't going far, and has pledged to return to Jawbone many times as a visitor, friend, and volunteer.

We would like to welcome **Jonathan Ross** as our new Facilities Director. Jonathan grew up in Oregon, 30 minutes up river from Coos Bay, and is happy to be returning to the forest. With just the right background of very diverse skills, Jonathan rose to the top of more than 50 applicants and we are very excited about the enthusiasm and professionalism he is bringing to this very important job.

Science Instructor **Olie Smith** departed

Jawbone in July to begin graduate study in Fisheries Biology at University of California Humboldt. We welcome **Bobby Cressman** as our newest Science Instructor. Bobby worked as an intern in Jawbone Flats this summer, and is looking forward to taking on an increased role.

Rebekah and the rest of the kitchen staff continue to amaze and delight with their healthy, wholesome, and delicious meals. We welcome **Ben Yates** to the kitchen as our newest Assistant Cook. Ben arrived, on bike all the way from Kentucky, in early September. Assistant Cook **Brian Campbell** departed at the end of summer to finish his last semester of school in New York. Brian will be returning in December as the Facilities Assistant. Former Facilities Assistant **Connor Ryan** moved on from Jawbone in July in pursuit of higher education.

## Family Fun at Jawbone Flats

*continued from cover*

coming seasons, but either way, getting out into the wilderness with the people you consider family is an unbeatable adventure.

Renting a cabin at Jawbone was the highlight of my mom's recent trip to the Pacific Northwest. All we wanted was a little bit of relaxation after our busy touring and we finally found it here. We sat on the porch of Cabin 7 drinking coffee and playing Scrabble in the mornings, and enjoyed the warmth of the woodstove and home cooked meals in the evenings. Rent a cabin with a few other families though, and the scene changes. A board member came with some of his best friends and their kids for Labor Day weekend. Some people snorkeled the depths of Opal Pool while kids hunted for insects. Light up Bocce ball and guitar playing kept everyone entertained well into the night. Visiting Opal Creek together is swiftly becoming a tradition for this group. Cozy cabins in a place of staggering beauty create the perfect vacation destination for the whole family.



**Family workshops are filled with activities for every age.**

There are many distractions in our daily lives, and often quality time with those we love gets pushed aside in favor of other important duties. Opal Creek is just the place to kick back, sit on the porch and experience that quality time we are missing. Where better to unplug with no TVs, video games, computers or phones than in our cabins? The miles of trails and crystal clear streams will entertain and amaze families of all ages.

Even if you aren't part of a large family, Opal Creek strives to create a feeling of family & community within our Weekend Workshops and among all of our guests. Our instructors take the time to know the groups they work with and recognize faces when they return the next year. Families & individuals dine together on wholesome, vegetarian comfort food prepared by our Food Service Director, Rebekah Ygelsias and her wonderful staff. After the last activity of the evening, folks retire to their comfortable shared cabins, and sit talking, playing board games, or quietly reading. When they leave on Sunday there is an inevitable exchange of email addresses for photo swaps and to continue building on new friendships.

If you haven't been to Opal Creek this season, come up the mountain and visit. We have several workshops still on the calendar and some incredible cabin rental specials for the remainder of this fall season. Autumn in the Cascades is spectacular with cool crisp nights and sun soaked days, the forest is ablaze with the changing leaves of the Maples and the deep dark green of the Firs, Cedars, and Hemlocks.

See you in the woods!

## Welcome New Board Chair Adam Lane

In a year of transitions, Opal Creek would like announce some changes to our Board of Directors. We would like to welcome our new board chair, Adam Lane. We are extremely grateful to past board chair Thor Hinckley, who led our organization for the last two years through some challenging times. We also would like to welcome two new board members, Liam Sherlock and Greg Meenahan. Both bring valuable skills and ideas to the organization at a crucial time for Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center.

A note from Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center Board Chair, Adam Lane:

I believe that education matters. It matters to individuals and it matters to societies.

At Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center, learning comes alive in ways that many students have never before imagined, much less experienced. Inspiration is found under moss covered rocks and in a pristine landscape virtually untouched by the industrial world. Many come to the programs of Opal Creek expecting insights in the sciences of ecology, biology and botany. And, while they are rarely disappointed, some will come away with renewed or new found emotional and spiritual connection to nature.

Joy of learning can be found in many ways. Some love learning because of an inspired teacher. Others need hands on experience in a place as beautiful as Opal Creek to start them on that path. But, however they find it, those who love to learn will learn more and learn more easily throughout their lives. I believe that those lucky enough to experience Opal Creek either on their own or with the help of its inspired and dedicated instructors will benefit long after they leave Jawbone Flats for the walk back to civilization.

I also believe that our future as a society depends on having a better understanding of how we impact our natural environment. Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center teaches these lessons both explicitly through its programs and its facilities but also implicitly by reminding us of just how beautiful the world can be.

Times are challenging right now for families, businesses and non-profits alike. Donations are harder to come by as people struggle just to make ends meet. Foundations have less money to give because of declines in the stock market. Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center is asking itself hard questions about its mission, priorities and resource allocations. Despite these challenges I am optimistic about our future. When given the opportunity to lead the board of directors I said yes because I believe the staff and board have the talent, passion and vision to make the organization more successful than it has ever been in the past.

— Adam Lane

*Board Chair Adam Lane enjoys an evening walk with his son James.*



## Help us Create a Legacy

The children we teach today will be the children managing our natural resources tomorrow. Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center stewards the 35,000 acres that make up this pristine watershed. Our programs are rich in content and stem from the knowledge that people must experience their landscape if they are going to truly understand and appreciate it.

Help us to share this experience with our school children.

Over half of our annual revenue comes from individuals like you who make annual gifts. This ongoing support allows us to maintain our historic facility and run the excellent science education programs you have come to expect.

**“Opal Creek is a place where time moves with the seasons and life responds intuitively. It instills the wonder of places and processes far older and wilder than any of us could have imagined.”**

— Jane Braxton Little, Audubon March-April 2007

“There is no place in the world like Opal Creek.” These are words we hear often, simple words, and yet they convey a very powerful sentiment. All of western Oregon looked like this once. Now we have only this one jewel.

It is easy to make a gift. Go online or use the envelope we have included to send a check. Opal Creek is a valuable part of Oregon's heritage. With your help we can continue to educate and inspire our population with the magnificence of Oregon's uncut gem.

# Jawbone Journal

**April 4th** Seasonal staff move into Jawbone. There isn't too much snow to shovel this year, and we all get cozy with fires in our woodstoves.

**April 13th** After a week of staff training, we are ready to welcome Vose Elementary, our first school group of the season. Every kind of weather was thrown at us while we hiked and hunted in the streams- rain, sleet, snow, and sunshine. The students were all smiles no matter what, happy to be out in the woods.

**May 8th** Kaola is running with her dog around the Battle Ax loop trail and they spot a bobcat! Bobcats are only 16-30 pounds and 24 inches tall, but they are powerful creatures. We find their scat around camp on a regular basis.

**May 16th** A crew of very determined volunteers carry large wooden beams from Jawbone up to the broken Cedar Flats bridge.

**May 30th** The temperature reaches 90 degrees already! Staff are leaping into the creek at every opportunity. Butterflies are out in the meadow and garter snakes soak up the sun.

**July 1st** Instructors Katie, Jennie, and Kaola venture into Bull of



*Our Beginning Backpackers rejoice on top of Battle Ax.*

the Woods Wilderness to scout 2009 routes. Weather is perfect and swimming was great at Twin Lakes, but they are chased uphill by mosquitoes at Pansy Lake. At the ridge top, they pause to rest and admire the flowers that are blooming.

**July 4th** Team Jawbone heads to Mill City for the first Bed Race in many years. Current staff and Opal Creek alumni work to push the bed from the starting line to the finish. The day was hot and the work was hard; our team looked great in their costumes but came in second place. Maybe next year we will reclaim the trophy!

**July 6th** Town is bustling with twenty four Wilderness First

Responders. The classes are long and participants work up an appetite. Rebekah, Will, and Brian work their kitchen magic to create three beautiful meals each day. Evenings are filled with OCAFC vs WFR soccer games and studying. By the end of this ten day course, we are sad to say good bye to all of the wonderful students and WMI staff.

**July 11th** Our new Pelton Wheel loses its bearings and there is no hydro power in camp for two weeks. Thanks so much to Facilities Director Joe O'Neill for rationing generator power and ultimately fixing the wheel.

**July 17th** The dedicated and enthusiastic Opal Creek Board of Directors converges in Jawbone for a weekend full of work and play. These conscientious people do an incredible job behind the scenes so that OCAFC can deliver the quality hands-on education programs you know and love.

**July 21st** Guest astronomer Tony George invites staff and campers to the meadow to identify constellations and witness an iridium flare, one of the brightest events in the night sky. They also watch the space station as it migrates along the ridge.

**July 24th** Opal Creek staff enjoy an evening croquet tournament.

Hors d'oeuvres are served and formal dress is required.

**August 2nd** Our first Opal Creek Expedition into the Bull of the Woods Wilderness sets out. Students enjoy huckleberries along the trail as they climb up and over mountains in search of alpine lakes to snorkel and swim in. At Twin Lakes, they see an otter!

**August 29th** Science Instructor Bobby Cressman scuba dives into Battle Ax pool at night. He returns to tell tales of caddis flies, Coastal Giant salamanders, and rainbow trout living in the cool depths. Read his personal account on the Opal Creek blog, [www.opalcreek.org](http://www.opalcreek.org).

**Sept 9th** After a holiday week-end of rain and cool weather, we find the first chanterelles of the season just coming out of the ground. Can't wait for the Mushroom Workshops!

**Crisp, cool nights** and bright red Vine Maples signal the return of autumn to the forest. School groups have returned, mushrooms are peeking out of the forest duff, and the tree squirrels are busily collecting seeds for winter food caches. We hope to see you in the forest before the snow flies.

—the residents of Jawbone Flats.

*Jawbone residents enjoy an evening of croquet on the lawns.*



# Thank You! *(donors between April 21, 2009 and September 16, 2009)*

## **Forest Patron: \$1,000+**

Beamer's Natural Food Stores, INC  
Tom Morawski  
Barbara Roessner  
The Max and Anna Levinson Foundation  
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## **Forest Benefactor: \$500-\$999**

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## **2010 RESERVATIONS**

We are busily creating our 2010 Program Schedule which will be released in January. Stay tuned for some new and exciting programs at Opal Creek and beyond. Members only cabin rental and workshop enrollment period opens on November 16th. Opal Creek members get priority booking. Be sure to get your first choice of weekends for your 2010 Jawbone Flats visit. Cabin rentals open to the general public on January 4, 2010 after we return from the holiday.

## **VOLUNTEER WEEKEND**

As stewards of the Opal Creek watershed, Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center seeks to maintain and improved the health and of this ecosystem and the safety of its trails. Active stewardship includes education and outreach, as well as sweat and hard work. Join us at Opal Creek for a weekend of clearing trails and cleaning areas around our Jawbone Flats education center. The work for these weekends will be hard, manual labor. Come prepared to help in this manner.

**Fall 2009 Volunteer Weekend:** November 7-8. Please call in advance to reserve your space. Suggested donation to cover food costs: \$25.00 per person.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Natural History Spotlight

### Red Crossbills *Loxia curvirostra*

by Kaola Swanson



Each time the door to our makeshift laundry facility is opened, a handful of colorful birds burst out from underneath the floor boards. Common Crossbill males are a streak of deep brick red; females in their olive and yellow plumage aren't shabby either. These small birds are well adapted to the coniferous forest, prying open Douglas fir and Western hemlock cones with their aptly named, long, overlapping, crossed beaks. They move in flocks and it is quite a joy to see them streaming out from under the building and into surrounding tree tops. We also find them perched below the charcoal grills in camp, supplementing their diet of seeds with ash that is rich in sodium and calcium. Common Crossbills (called Red Crossbills in the US) will migrate wherever the seed crop is richest and for this reason, they are one of a few bird species that can breed year round. Young are

fed exclusively on seeds. Bill shape varies according to the preferred seed crop within a population and there are likely 8 or 9 different species of Red Crossbill in North America. In the mountains, they are harbingers of seasonal change as they migrate through; in much of Oregon they are year-round residents. As the vine maples begin to turn the same red and yellow colors of the crossbills, we are anticipating the shorter days and cooler mornings of fall in the Western Cascades.

## THEIR OWN WORDS

*"Kitchen staff added a fun and cheerful homey atmosphere that enriched the whole group – they clearly love their job and the kids."* – Buckman Elementary Parent

*"It really tied in great to classroom learning and science benchmarks."* – Vose Elementary Teacher

*"Totally fun & informative & creative teaching strategies. Lots learned and lots of laughter too. I know the kids were never bored!"* – Buckman Elementary Parent

*"It's heartening for me, a long time Oregon resident, to not only visit this great example of responsible stewardship toward the natural environment, but to also have the opportunity to show it to others who live out of state. Thanks to you, your staff and others the Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center is a major point of pride for Oregonians."*

– Opal Creek Ancient Forest Center member