

## Exhibit Room Environmental Education Brochure



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Capstone Project

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Methodology.....	4
Results/Discussion.....	5
Conclusion.....	5
Appendices.....	7
References.....	8

## Introduction

North Mountain Park is overseen by the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission. It is located along Bear Creek on North Mountain road. The park includes a Nature Center, playing fields, demonstration gardens, and trails with lots of wild life. When the park was first being planned in 1995, citizens requested a Nature Center. It took a year of citizens attending public meetings before the Ashland Parks and recreation Commission approved the idea (Cottle 2016). The Nature Center has been funded by the Ashland Parks and recreation Commission since 1997 (Cottle 2016). The mission of the Nature Center is to “promote greater community awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the local natural environment, and to foster stewardship through educational programs and activities” (Cottle 2016).

The Nature Center offers many educational opportunities including community programs, school programs, service learning, and activities for kids and adults to do inside an exhibit room. The exhibit room is full of games, activities, and live fish for community members to interact with. One of its biggest features is a floor to ceiling mural painted by Jenna Kesgen. Kesgen was a student at Southern Oregon University. Between 2010 and 2011 she spent over 60 hours painting the mural (Cottle 2016). The mural shows the Rogue Valley in different time throughout human settlement. It includes many landforms recognizable to the Rogue Valley.

Because the mural is so full of details it can take many hours before you have seen everything. Even if someone has looked at everything they may not know what they are looking at or the history behind what they are seeing. This brings me to my project which focuses on certain items in the mural and helps the public to learn more about them.

### **Methodology**

My project focuses on engaging the public in the mural and helping them to learn from it. When I first talked with the manager of the park Libby VanWyhe, she gave me a set of goals that

needed to be completed in order to finish the project. Goal one was to examine the mural and take inventory of all the different details that can be found. After that the next step was to come up with a list of ten of those details that would be interesting for kids to learn about. For the ten details I chose; Horsetail, Camas (See Figure 1), Mt. Ashland, Bicycles, Screech Owl, Fire and controlled burns, Native Americans, Turkey Vultures, The Railroad, and farming and gardening.

The third goal was to come up with a set of questions relating to each of the details listed and where they can be found in the mural. My questions included; Do you see the green horsetail plant?, Can you find a blue flower that local Native Americans ate?, Which mountains look over the Rogue Valley?, How many Bicycles can you count?, Where do you see fore being used to help the land?, How many handmade baskets can you find?, There kettling Turkey Vultures in the mural can you find them? How many do you see?, Can you find the train? Do you see any evidence of farming and gardening?

After writing questions for the details the next step was to use my photography minor and take photos of each detail. The photos go along with the answer to the questions and helps the kids find what they look like in the mural. After taking photos of all the details I wrote did you know facts for each of them. After gathering and creating everything I was suppose to put everything in to brochure file in Microsoft Publisher. Copies of the brochure would then be printed and laminated for kids to use. After creating the brochure for kids my last goals was to repeat the same process but this time creating a brochure with questions for adults. The details chosen were different than the ones for the kids version. They were; Skunk (See Figure 2), Sustainable house, Mt. McLoughlin, Pilot Rock, Butter cups, Table Rocks, Salmon, Plant communities, Solar and wind power, and Native Americans and seasonal rounds.

## **Results**

For my applied project I am going to end up with two brochures. One will be for kids and one for adults. They will be able to read a question about the mural and then try and find that detail in the mural. They will then be able to Open the brochure and see a pictures of they should be looking for. They will also find facts about that detail. When the project is finished I will have created ten brochures for both the kids as well as adults.

By working on this project I have learned a lot. First I learned how to use Microsoft Publish which I knew nothing about before. I was able to learn how to create my own template, insert photos, add text, design backgrounds, and save different file types to create a brochure (See Figure 3 and 4). Along with Microsoft Publisher I also learned how to create curriculum and activities regarding Environmental Education. A big challenge for me was having to decide how to word things different for the different ages. I also had to decide what topics would be most interesting to cover depending o the age. The skills I learned during my project will be very useful for me in the future as I plan on one day working in Environmental Education.

### **Conclusion**

By creating this project, I am helping the Nature Center to implement new activities for the town to interact with. North Mountain Parks Nature Center relies a lot on students and volunteers like me in order to run properly. Not many people work at the Nature Center, and the ones that do, have a lot of work themselves. Having students work on project like mine, is a way to get the community involved as well as get jobs done. I am very thankful to North Mountain Park and the Ashland Parks and Recreation commission for giving me the opportunity to work on this project and create something for the community to enjoy.

## **Appendices**

project partners



Figure 1

Figure 2



Figure 3

Kid's Quest			Mural Discovery
Where do you see fire being used to manage the land?			Can you find the green "Horsetail" plant?
Can you find a person using a basket in the mural? What are they using it for?			Can you spot the blue flowers that were an important food for Native Americans?
Can you find the train?			Which mountains overlook the Rogue Valley?
There are circling Turkey Vultures in the mural. How many can you find?			How many bikes can you count in the mural?
Do you see examples of farming and gardening?			Where do you see a bird that hunts at night? Do you know what it's called?

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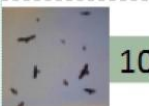












Fun Facts	Answers	Answers	Fun Facts
The horsetail plant has been around since the dinosaurs.			Plant communities in our valley are adapted to thrive with fire.
Camas roots were cooked in earth ovens for several days before they were eaten.			Native people used baskets for grinding food, sifting, cooking, storage, and even as hats.
Ashland's drinking water comes from rain and snow pack on Mt. Ashland.			The railroad help to transport fruit grown in our valley, and opened up markets.
Riding bikes helps to reduce green house gasses in our atmosphere.	4 	10 	When Turkey Vultures spiral high on thermal updraft, they are called a "kettle".
Western Screech Owls are very silent flyers. This helps them catch their prey at night			The Rogue Valley is a great place for gardening and accessing locally grown food.



Figure 4

Adult	Discovery, pursuit, journey, discovery		
What rock formation was created by an eruption from Mt. Olson over 7million years ago?			What mountain in our valley is a 9,495 Ft lava cone?
Did you know that there are two kinds of butter cup flowers in our region?			Which plant community in the mural is...?
Which prominent rock formation is part of the Cascade Siskiyou National monument?			In what season did Native Americans burn there habitat?
How does the sustainability home use sun and water?			Can you find a crepuscular animal using downed woody debris?
How many salmon Migrate up the Rogue River each year?			Ca you find examples of the sustainability house using wind?

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More Facts	Answers	Answers	More Facts
Mt. McLoughlin is the smallest mountain in Oregon's chain of six major volcanic peaks in the Cascade range .			The Table Rocks are home to many species including the endemic Dwarf-Woolly Meadow Foam Flower.
Chaparral is the collection of multiple stemmed shrubs that are adapted to grow very close together.			The Native Butter cup has a brown underneath which is different from the Non-Native that is yellow underneath.
Summer Fire is essential to the health of a chaparral community and some plants help fuel fire with sticky resins.			Pilot Rock is a basalt plug of an eroded volcano. It was formed about 30 million years ago.
The spotted skunk feasts on small rodents, which also use downed logs for protection.			The sustainability house has a solar panel that creates energy from the sun. It also saves water by collecting rain water.
Approximately 2% of Ashland's electricity is generated by city owned turbines at Reeder reservoir.			One in every thousand salmon will make it from the Rogue River out to the ocean and back up the Rogue to spawn.

## **Bibliography**

Cottle, Dorinda. 'City of Ashland, Oregon-Parks and Recreation-Nature Center.' *City of Ashland, Oregon - HOME*.N.p.,n.d. Web. 16 Nov 2016