

Project Playground – November 2005 Newsletter

Happy Thanksgiving, everyone! We've been waiting for a good reason to put out another newsletter, and we just got several. We definitely have a lot to be thankful for!

We recently sent out a barrage of grant applications and funding requests. The first good news was that **SELCO Credit Union** has agreed to give us \$250 toward our goal. Even better, the good people at **Jerry's Home Improvement** in Eugene have donated \$1,500. And best of all, our local **Kiwanis Club** has agreed to bring its total donation to \$5,400, and they are calling for other local businesses to match it! We are grateful for these organizations' faith in our project.

Santa's Coming! Our next fundraiser will be a photo op with Santa in conjunction with Creswell's tree lighting ceremony on Thursday, Dec. 1. Santa will be available for photos before the ceremony starts (from 5:30 pm on) at Sunrise Bagel. Santa's sticking around for the weekend, too, and has generously agreed to appear at Ray's from 4 to 7 on Friday, Dec. 2, and from 10 to noon on Saturday, Dec. 3. Professional-quality photos will be taken by none other than "Give Peas a Chance" Chronicle photographer Stephen Derminer, and will be available immediately on professional quality photo paper! All proceeds will go toward playground equipment. Please drop by to say hello to our playful elves!

Ongoing Fundraising. You may have noticed our jars appearing in local businesses, including Dari-Mart. It may not seem like much to you, but your spare change added up to more than \$100 last month! Please scroll down to read more about how you can make a larger tax-deductible donation.

Previous Fundraising. We had a busy summer, working on fundraisers and planning the tremendously successful Run for the Park event, which brought 169 participants, including 79 from Creswell. We got a lot of good press, including the Guard and TV stations throughout Oregon. Very exciting stuff! Many thanks to race manager Jack Spaulding and the many volunteers who helped us pull this off, not to mention all those who actually came out and exerted themselves on our behalf.

All told, we've raised an amazing \$18,000 from area residents and businesses. Recently, we have applied for grants and funding from several organizations, and we are still waiting to hear from several of them. We have reason to believe one big one is going to come through very soon.

However, all have told us that the more community support we can demonstrate, the better—so we still need your help!

Many thanks to those who have already donated!

\$500 and up:

Kiwanis Club, Creswell, OR
Foster Farms, Creswell, OR
Jerry's Home Improvement, Eugene, OR
Interfaith, Creswell, OR
Ross Murry, Creswell, OR
Ron and Carrie Petitti, Creswell, OR

\$250-\$500:

Advantage Timber Cutters, LLC
Cascade Home Center
Creswell Chiropractic
Figaro's Pizza
Los Cabos Mexican Restaurant
Marquess Properties
Marquess Timber Management, Inc.
Sears Ranch
SELCO Credit Union
Siuslaw Bank
South Willamette Veterinary Clinic
The Natural Path
The Rocket-In
Windermere

In-Kind Donations (local):

Ray's Food Place
Derminer Painting
Mr. Machos
Curtis Coffee Co.
Oregon Tees
Mickey's Flaggers
Rainbow Graphics
The Creswell Chronicle

We apologize to anyone we may have forgotten. For a full list, visit our Web site at

<http://home.centurytel.net/playground/givingthanks.html>

Why Are We Doing This? The reason our group of four moms, four

husbands, and seven kids are spending our precious free time on this project is **because we know that playgrounds work!** Playgrounds help our kids gain confidence, physical stamina, and social skills. Sure, we can cite studies conducted by pediatricians and social scientists that back us up, but more than anything else, we can see it ourselves.

We have all kinds of opportunities for learning at our houses. Toys that inspire creative play, scads of art supplies, and an expansive library of books that spark imagination.

But I know I can almost SEE my child grow in every respect after an afternoon at a good playground.

There's no replacement for the confidence that children get when they make a friend at the park and conquer a play structure together. I saw it a few months back when my daughter learned to swing herself for the first time next to a buddy. I saw it the other day when she climbed the "rock climbing" wall herself for the first time, again inspired by a friend.

Raising a child in these complicated times is a challenge, to be sure. But we see it as a challenge that we can win, with strength, resolve, solid values that transcend religion and ethnicity, and a return to old-fashioned ideals. We are convinced that a return to simple, unstructured play is the best possible thing we can do for our preschool kids, and the best way to continue to build self-esteem, strength, and self-confidence in older kids.

Master Parks Plan. In addition to all her hard work for our project, Project Playground Chair Juli McLennan has also been busy participating in the city's Parks and Open Space Master Plan committee. The committee is creating a Master Plan for the city's parks, including existing Holt Park and Garden Lake Park, and planning for future parks. If anyone would like information about the plan, call the city at 895-2531, or visit the city's new Web site at <http://www.ci.creswell.or.us/parks.html>. We also have a link on our Web site. And you can see also an "OurCreswell.com" story at <http://www.ourcreswell.com/article.asp?id=2407>.

Keep Checking Our Website! Well, we know our website could use an extreme makeover, but since we would rather spend our time earning money for the playground than focusing on aesthetics, it's probably going to stay under permanent construction. We do try to keep the information that's there current and accessible, so please stop by often to see if anything's changed, and let us know if you have any problems:

<http://home.centurytel.net/playground>

What you will find at the site is information about the project, including pictures from recent fundraisers, pix of some of the equipment we are looking at and one possible configuration, as well as a list of contributors, fundraising information/upcoming events, contact info, and links to key project-related sites for information about everything you ever wanted to know about playgrounds. Comments and suggestions are welcome—send to playground@centurytel.net.

Tax-Deductible Donations. If you think this project is worthy of your hard-earned dollars and don't have time to make it to our fundraisers, you can always make a donation directly to Project Playground. Remember as 2005 draws to a close that, depending on your circumstances, donations may be tax-deductible. See IRS Publication 526 for more information (available online at <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p526/index.html>). Checks should be made out to "City of Creswell/Project Playground" and can be dropped off at City Hall, where you can get a receipt, or sent by mail (see Contact Info below).

Pledges may be made for future donations. We also welcome in-kind donations or services. High-level donors will be recognized on the Gold (\$5,000 or more), Silver (\$3,000), or Bronze (\$1,500) levels on new park signage and in our press statements and promotional materials, but any donation is welcome. For more information, contact Juli at 895-3089.

About Us. The Project Playground committee was formed in May 2004 by a group of concerned Creswell moms—Juli McLennan, Deb Jolda, Monica Marquess, and Heidi Wegand—who believed that Creswell needs an improved public play space. You can read more about our organization in press articles on our website.

Shameless Story Time Plug. Check out some great photos on the new Creswell Chronicle website at http://www.thecreswellchronicle.com/news/story.cfm?story_no=813. Tell everyone you know to drop by the Community Center on Thursdays from 10 to 11 for a wonderful hour of learning artfully disguised as entertainment!

Comments Welcome. As always, we want to hear from you. Comments, suggestions, or expressions of support are welcome. We especially want to get input and help from **kids** in the community. Write us!

Contact Info. You can drop a line to this address, playground@centurytel.net, or speak with us directly by calling Juli McLennan at 895-3089 or Deb Jolda at 895-5609. Our mailing address is Project Playground, PO Box 981, Creswell, OR 97426. Visit the website at <http://home.centurytel.net/playground>. Problems with or questions about the newsletter can be directed to Deb.

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PLAY ON!