

# Behind the Scenes

May 2020



Dear Friend,

The sunshine streaming into my window so early in the morning is a clear sign that summer is well on its way! Though the warm, sunny days make working from home quite enjoyable, the abundant amount of "liquid sunshine" that we had through the latter half of May was also a welcome sight - especially with the very low snowpack levels this past winter. In this issue of *Behind the Scenes*, I've included a portion of an excellent piece on the importance of protecting our water resources written by Danny Jaffer for *The Independent*, a monthly publication of Trammert News (the link to the full editorial is also included). As part of our current Strategic Plan, the LWC will be learning about and sharing strategies for all of us to conserve water and protect water quality by being more aware of the stormwater that runs off our properties and how we can help keep that water as clean as possible. As a Friend of the LWC, your support helps us bring information and events (one day!) to our community to help us all learn how to protect and improve water quality and conserve water. Thank you for your support and we look forward to delving into these topics in the future. Look for a survey coming out soon that will help us adjust our work to meet your interests and needs during the era of COVID-19! Take care, stay safe, and happy reading!

--Suzanne Teller, LWC Outreach Coordinator (Outreach@LuckiamuteLWC.org or leave a voicemail at 503-837-0237)

## #FindAFish Contest Winners!

Throughout the month of May, we had many terrific entries to our #FindAFish contest. A big *thank you* goes out to everyone who participated and sent us your creative fish art! Congratulations to our four winners, who each won a \$25 gift certificate to a local Monmouth-Independence restaurant.



**From left to right:** Our May 8 winner was Helen Lee and her daughter, Florence (pictured). Heath Kierstad and her daughter, Ketti (pictured) won our May 15 drawing. On May 22, Amelia and Maddox Wymore (and mom, Kara) were selected as our week 3 winners. Our final winners were Aiden James Trueax and his mom, Carrie, for our May 29 drawing. To all who participated, thank you for helping to spread the word about this fun way to show how much you Love Your Watershed!

## Love Your Watershed News: Our Plant Identification Walk has gone virtual!



We are excited to announce that you will soon be able to participate in a virtual Plant ID Walk & Learn from your living room! Since we had to cancel our Plant Walk that had been scheduled for May 20 at Sarah Helmick State Park, we decided to bring the trail to you instead. In this video, Jody Einerson and Brad Withrow-Robinson from Oregon State University Extension Office will be showing you how to identify several native woodland trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants commonly found in our watershed. A

big thank you goes to Willamette Habitat Restoration fund for providing the funding for this video production, which will soon be available for viewing on our website!

Your Land. Your Rivers. Your Community. Your Watershed.

# Watershed Notes

**Note: The following piece is an excerpt from an editorial that was published on May 1, 2020, in *The Independent*, a monthly publication of *TrammartNews.com*. We have reprinted this excellent piece of writing about the importance of water and the health of our watershed with permission from *Trammart News* and the author, *Danny Jaffer*. You can read the full text of *Danny's* editorial at <http://www.trammartnews.com/the-independent.html>**

## **Water**

by *Danny Jaffer*, President of the *Luckiamute Domestic Water Cooperative*



The Willamette Valley is so very fertile because of the water falling on it, and flowing through it, both on the surface, and underground. It is what brought the first human inhabitants of this continent to this area, and it was the magnet that drew tens of thousands of people across the country to settle here, farm the land, and build a society at the water's edge. It was a rapid growth, creating a booming economy by the start of the 20th century. The three-F's: farming, fishing and forestry, were the drivers, but other businesses, many of them creat-

ed to support the three-F's, soon were working full tilt with them. None of this would have been possible without the water, and particularly the Willamette River, providing power, transport and irrigation.

It is a phenomenal achievement, but the gain is not without consequence. There once was a time in the not too distant past when the sanitation adage was: "The solution to pollution is dilution." Or, in other words, "if you've got a big enough water source, no one will worry about what you dump in it." I think that everyone now understands that this is pure folly. The truth is that over the past century and a half we have abused and ignored the health of our valley's water. The most famous quote in reference to this was by the late great Gov. Tom McCall who referred to our great river as a "festering cesspool" in his famous 1961 documentary, "Pollution in Paradise." During this time, fish were rarely seen in the river. While we have made great strides in cleaning up the visible pollution since the 1970's, there is still a great deal unseen that quietly makes its way to our waterways and aquifers from non-point sources, like city storm drains, agricultural and forest run-off, home septic systems and even recreation. Of course, this is not an intentional defilement, but it is dangerous to our water system just the same. Our valley, with over 200 different crops being grown, producing 70% of the nation's grass seed, 95% of the nation's hazelnuts, and accounting for 70% of the Oregon's wine production, as well as being home to 70% of the state's population, must have a clean, safe water supplies to maintain the civilization that we have created here in the "Eden at the end of the Oregon Trail."



My association with the Luckiamute Domestic Water Cooperative (LDWC), and with the Luckiamute Watershed Council (shout out!) to which I have been a volunteer and contributor (LWC is not related to LDWC, but hard at work protecting and enhancing the watershed from which LDWC draws the resource), has convinced me that we can, and should do a better job of protecting the resource. *It is too important not to.*

## ***A special invitation to the LWC Board Meeting on June 11***

You are always welcome to join our monthly board meetings, which are normally held on the second Thursday of every month from 6 to 8pm. But we are extending to you a special invitation to attend our next board meeting on June 11, which will be held via Zoom. At this meeting, you will have a chance to meet the newest LWC staff member, Aubrey Cloud. You will also be hearing from Liz Redon, who is the regional grants program representative for the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). Our board meeting will follow OWEB's board meeting, which will culminate in a decision about whether OWEB will award funding for our Upper Luckiamute Mainstem Anchor Habitat Enhancement Project and Benton Soil & Water Conservation District's J2E River to Ridge Diversity Project. You will be able to access the meeting agenda, Zoom web link and phone-in options on our board meeting webpage by Tuesday, June 9, at <https://www.luckiamutelwc.org/monthly-meeting-details.html>. We hope to see you there!