

## MEMORANDUM



**TO:** RANDY AULER, DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES *R Auler*  
ROB HAYES, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICES / CITY ENGINEER

**FROM:** MATT WIKTOROWSKI, FIELD OPERATIONS SENIOR MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** *ITC Community Sports Park*  
TIM POPE PLAY STRUCTURE MAINTENANCE UPDATE

**DATE:** MARCH 24, 2009

*3-26-09*  
*To: Mayor and City Council Members*

*FYI. [Signature]*

In the summer of 1997, the Tim Pope Memorial Play Structure was constructed near the Eight Mile Rd. entrance of ITC Community Sports Park. The structure was a custom community build project made primarily of Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA), treated southern yellow pine. Design of the structure included two play areas with age specific events. The first is a tot lot with equipment for children ages 2-5, and the second is designed for children ages 5-12. Both areas include swings, climbers, bridges and platforms.

The list below is a general overview of the functions performed by our crews to insure the structure is safe for users. The parks department has utilized funds primarily from its personnel and operation budgets to perform these tasks.

- Trash and litter pick-up -- Daily
- Pest exterminations (wasps and hornets) -- Annually (as necessary)
- Replacement of "S" hooks -- Annually (as necessary)
- Addition of Wood Fines (Safety Surfacing) -- Annually (as necessary)
- Replacement of vandalized spindles -- Annually
- Repair of broken benches -- Annually
- Addition of sand in boxes -- Annually
- Repair of nail pops and loose fastening hardware -- Annually
- Replacement of swing seats -- 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007
- Completion of donation pickets -- 1997 - 2003
- Addition of three laminated family picnic tables --2000
- Complete removal of a hazard sugar maple -- 2001
- Repair of tire swing -- 2002 -- 2006 (Required frequent repair)
- Partial removal of a Black Walnut located in the center of the structure. -- 2004
- Complete Removal of Walnut in 2008
- Repair of elevated suspension bridge -- 2004 -- 2007 (Requires frequent repair)
- Rebuild all chain climbers (new chain and rubber hosing) -- 2005
- Addition of 200 feet of custom picket fencing encompassing the structure -- 2006
- Removal of tot lot climber (chain climbers destroyed wood framing) -- 2006
- Removal of tot lot spring rockers (Plastic cracked, handles vandalized) -- 2006
- Removal of hazard rubber belt bridge -- 2006

**General Maintenance List Cont**

- Replaced suspension bridge with decking walkway -- 2006
- Replacement of tot lot climber -- 2006
- Replacement of tot lot spring rockers -- 2006
- Replacement of tire swing and mechanical components -- 2006
- Purchase and installation of safety matting under tire swing -- 2006
- Volunteer clean-up and maintenance days, Omoron Corporation – 2006, 2007, 2008
- Entryway landscaping – 2006
- Addition of accessible parking locations and signage – 2006
- Replaced track and trolley ride chain to less than 7" – 2008
- Tightened swing hangers to the stabilizing beam – 2008

The wooden structure continues to require maintenance and resources as it ages. To date the unit is one of the most heavily utilized structures in our system. However, its accessibility and maintenance frequency continue to utilize resources. As the structure ages the metal chains, bolts, and wooden supports become worn, and the need for increased custom maintenance continues to grow.

On April 2, 2008 a comprehensive independent audit was completed by Site Masters Inc. of Cincinnati, Ohio. The audit was based on recommendations of the ASTM F1487-07 Standard Performance Safety Specification for Public Use Playground Equipment, and the surfacing was evaluated using criteria set forth by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). In addition to the ASTM and CPSC reports, an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), evaluation was also performed.

This 2008 audit identified seven areas of immediate concern they are as follows:

- 1) *The protective surfacing is significantly below its designed depth and may in fact not provide the attenuation required for compliance, in particular the areas under the swing seats. Further the lack of protective surfacing under the slide exit regions creates a potential problem, as the exit areas are too far above the protective surfacing. Secondly, the lack of surfacing and maintenance prevent the full use of the play area by the people using mobility devices.*

**Action: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services staff restored surfacing to adequate depth markings as part of an annual maintenance program ✓**

- 2) *The truck climber in the Tot Area has a serious protrusion because the wood headlamp is broken, and the fastening hardware is fully exposed.*

**Action: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services staff removed the protrusion hazard ✓**

- 3) *There are exposed concrete footers around the two racing car spring toys.*

**Action: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services staff restored surfacing to adequate depth as part of an annual maintenance program ✓**

- 4) *The Track/Trolley Ride hand grip is a suspended item that is not compliant and needs to be raised to have no more than 7 inches of chain.*

**Action: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services staff shortened the Chain to <7 inches. ✓**

5) *The swing hangers in the 5-12 area need to be lightened to the wood beam or replaced.*  
**Action: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services staff tightened swing hangers to the stabilizing beam.** ✓

6) *As designed the structure is not compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) and without a significant investment in redesign and construction it never will be.*

**Action: Submitted for Capital Outlay Project Replacement (Not Funded), Submitted for DNR Grant Funding (Denied)** ☐

7) *The condition of (what is believed to be southern yellow pine CCA treated) the wood on most of the equipment, including the structural members, railings and enclosures requires significant refurbishing.*

**Action: As decks and railings become worn from wearing against metal components, or are vandalized, staff replaces the custom parts with composite materials. It is suggested that the wooden portions of the structure are coated with approximately \$3000.00 of sealer every 12 months. Application of this material is being evaluated for use as the structure ages.** ☐

The Department of Public Services continues to inspect and maintain the Tim Pope Play Structure, as it does with all other play units contained in the parks system. We are always looking for assistance with any parks maintenance projects. The department has initiated conversations with Eagle Scout candidates to see if they would be willing to assist in coating our wooden structure, as well as, receiving quotes from contractors to supply the materials and perform the work.

As of March 25, 2009 The Tim Pope Memorial account has a balance of \$3,359.53. It is the department's intent to exhaust these funds toward the sealing of the structure in the spring of 2009, which if contracted is estimated to cost between \$5000 and \$7000. \*

Many communities across the country have considered replacing their wooden structures for multiple maintenance, CCA, and accessibility reasons. These communities have worked with some of the original organizations who built the initial structure to raise funds for replacement of modern and maintenance friendly units provided by numerous companies (Please see the attached article). )

# Playground Magazine

A young boy with wet hair and a joyful expression is playing in a water fountain. He is wearing dark shorts with a tropical pattern. Water is spraying all around him, creating a misty atmosphere. The background is a warm, golden-brown color, suggesting a sunny day.

JULY 2008

## **Wet and Wondrous!**

*The aquatic zone*

## **The Sun's Out**

*Is your protection IQ up?*

## **Leathers & Assoc. Goes to Oregon**

*Corvallis school gets new playground*

# The Consequences of Play Deprivation

*Good reason for concern*

*The Leathers playground was designed from the imaginations of the children of Wilson Elementary, which includes some local touches like the replica of the Corvallis courthouse tower.*



# Rebuilding Wildcat Park

## Oregon community pulls together...again

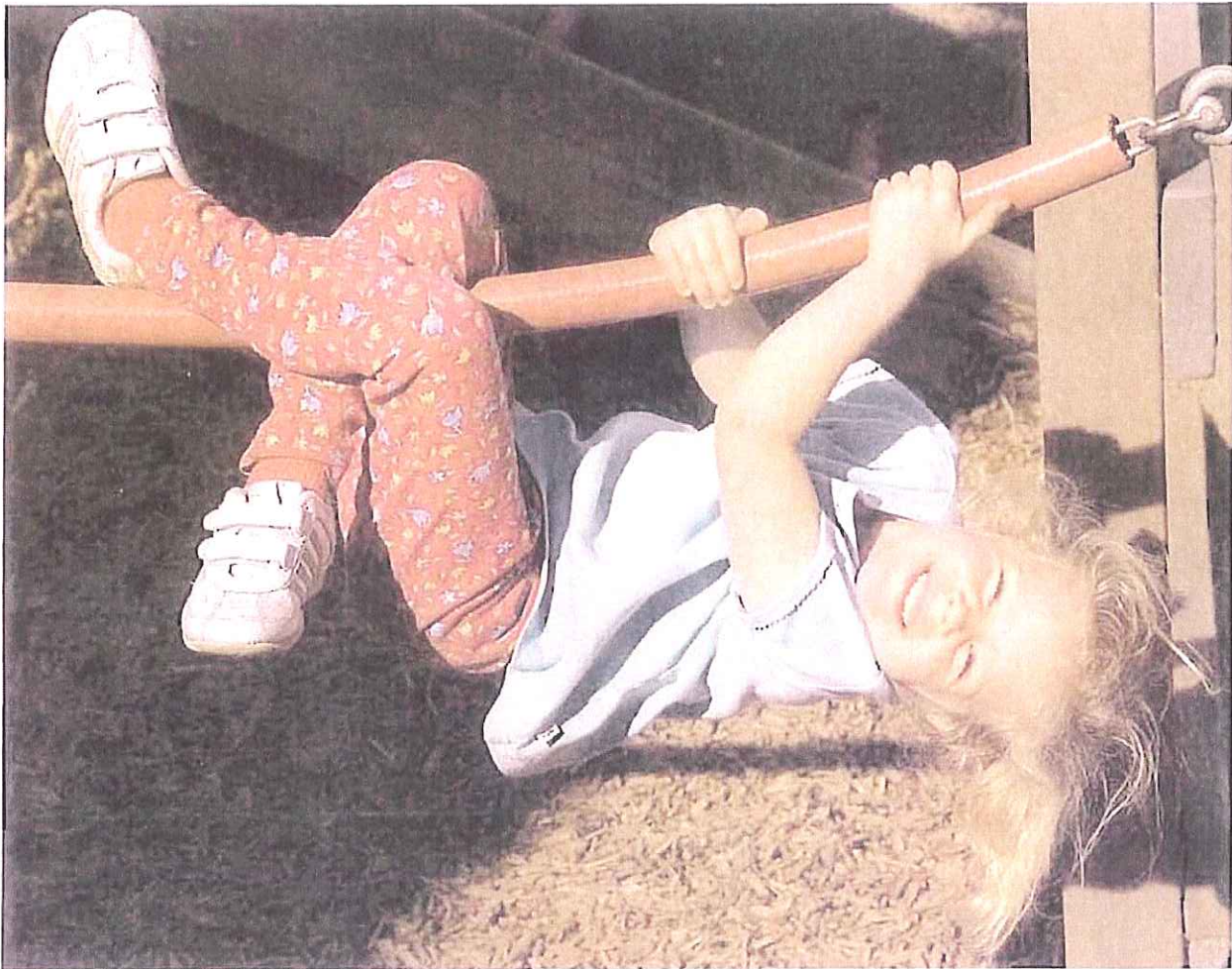
Photos and Story by Brady L. Kay

The original Wildcat Park was built by volunteers in 1989 at Wilson Elementary School, where the elaborate wooden structure did double-duty as a playground for the school and the community. The Leathers & Associates playground served the community well in Corvallis, Ore., but last year it had to be dismantled for

district was to learn the new safety codes that had changed since building the first playground.

This committee raised \$80,000 to begin the project and once again, Leathers & Associates of Ithaca, N.Y. was hired to facilitate the design, organize and construct the new Wildcat Park. The playground/park was designed

Three Sisters are three volcanic peaks of the Cascade Volcanic Arc and the Cascade Range in Oregon and are the ideal background for a climbing wall. Leathers incorporated the children's ideas into the design, which was built under the supervision of the New York-based manufacturer by over a thousand volunteers in this close-knit community.



safety reasons after nearly 18 years of continual use.

It was then up to a group of neighbors, Wilson school students and parents, and those in this Oregon community to form a committee to raise money, design and build a new play structure. The first step for the city and school

from the imaginations of the students and includes some local touches like the replica of the Corvallis courthouse tower that is the focal point of the play structure.

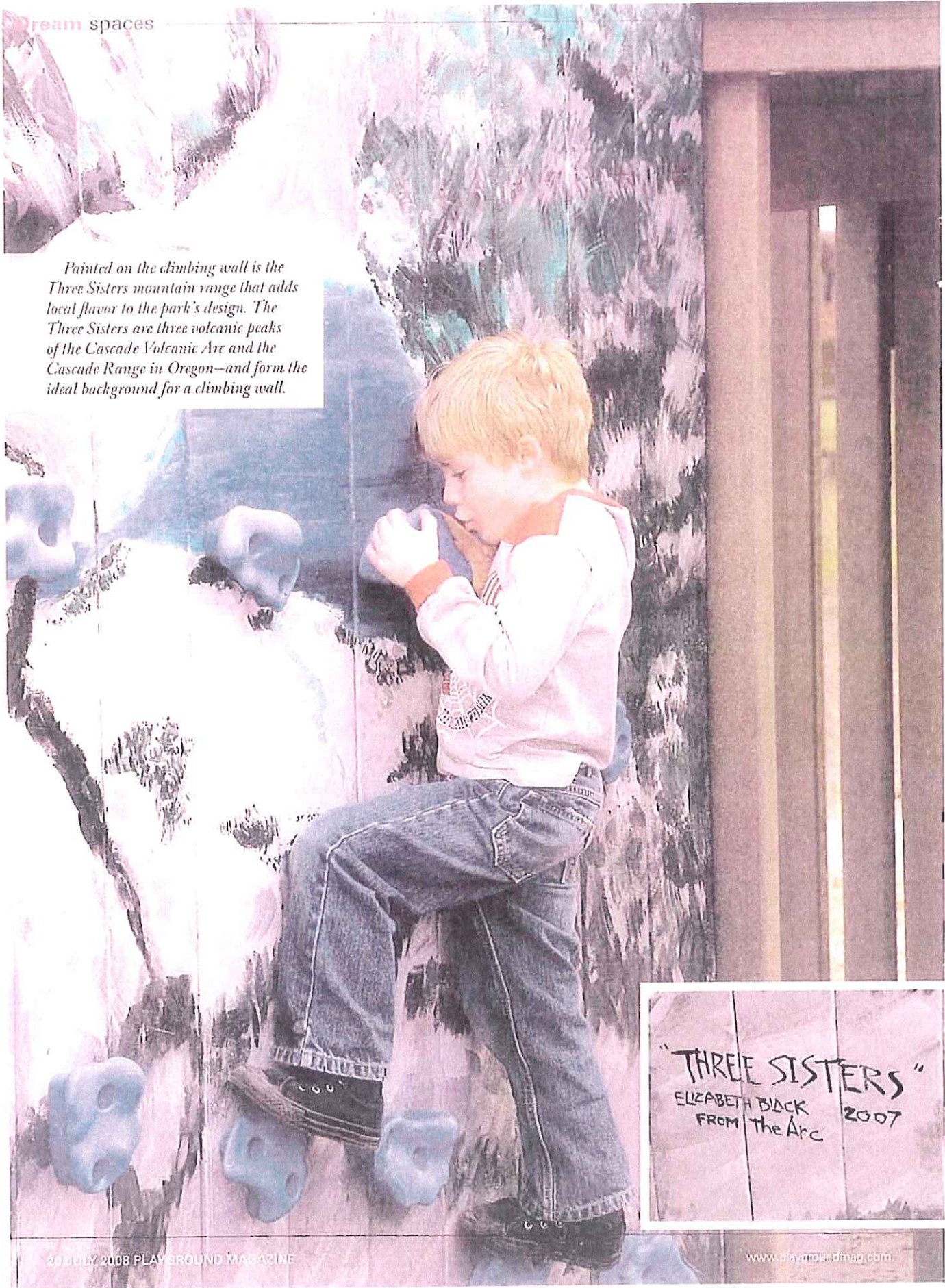
Painted on the climbing wall is the Three Sisters mountain range that adds local flavor to the park's design. The

The volunteer general coordinator for the project was Mark Hoffman who works at the Department of Nutrition & Exercise Sciences at Oregon State University.

"We liked the 'community-build' aspect so that's why we contacted Leathers again," explains Hoffman. "They

**Dream spaces**

*Painted on the climbing wall is the Three Sisters mountain range that adds local flavor to the park's design. The Three Sisters are three volcanic peaks of the Cascade Volcanic Arc and the Cascade Range in Oregon—and form the ideal background for a climbing wall.*



"THREE SISTERS"  
ELIZABETH BLACK 2007  
FROM The Arc

more than met our expectations and we knew going in what a detailed-oriented company they are."

"Through other fundraising efforts, donations and sponsorships, the community was able to come up with the additional money needed to complete the \$260,000 play structure in June of last year. The 12,000-square-foot playground even has a toddler section. "It's a completely fenced-in tot lot, which is a new playground standard where events for younger kids need to be separated from events for older kids," Hoffman said.

Other unique play features include the DNA Climber that is based on the DNA double helix spiral graphic symbol and is a favorite for kids who love to climb.

The custom, one-of-a-kind designs are a trademark of Leathers & Associates as it strives to build playgrounds that are unique to each community that it works with directly.

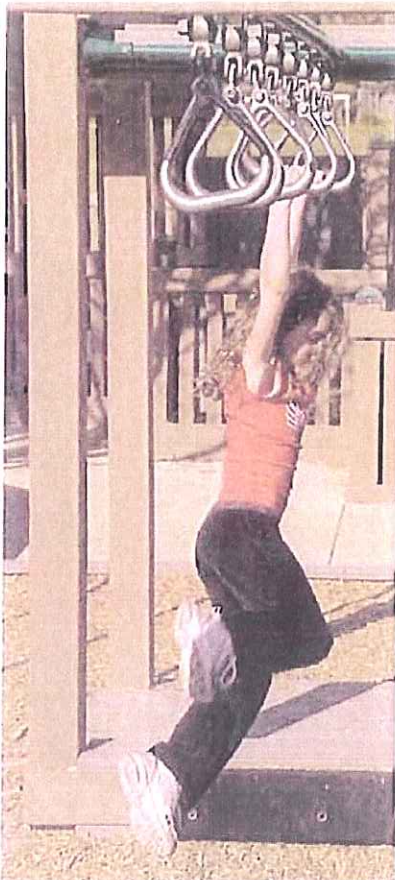
Many community groups helped in fundraising as children and the community collected 1.5 million pennies and covered the gym floor at Wilson School.

The Corvallis Rotary Club conducted a silent auction and dance with Johnny Lambo and the Lugnuts, which raised \$15,000. Collecting bottles and cans, a quilt show and spaghetti dinner were some of the other fundraising efforts.

Volunteers were grouped into committees defined as public relations, volunteers, food, childcare, tools and children representatives. When the time came to build the park, volunteers were assigned duties according to their expertise. Some used loaned hammers and saws to do the actual building, some

sanded or painted, some prepared food for the volunteers and some took care of the children so adults could work four-hour shifts. The entire park was built in five days and the community celebrated its completion. The new playground is constructed with recycled structural plastic and plastic composite lumber, making it much more maintenance-friendly than the previous playground built with pressured-treated lumber.

Leathers & Associates is a company that helps with everything from the playground design to organizing the



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*Wilson Elementary Principal Jeff Brew takes his turn on the DNA Climber with students from his school. Brew is happy the new playground is busy all the time with students as well as other kids from the Oregon community.*

build for communities. The manufacturer has been in business for nearly 40 years. The

community-built aspect of the company gradually evolved after Bob Leathers undertook a volunteer-built playground at his children's elementary school in Ithaca in 1971. When he first opened his architectural business, Bob planned to specialize in residential design and construction, but the direction of his company changed after news of the project's success quickly traveled to nearby communities. Soon more and more people were asking his firm to help them create playgrounds and thus began

his community-built career, which has now spanned more than three decades.



teer-built projects," says Marc Leathers. "We have at least one playground in every state as well as in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, India and the United Kingdom."

Wildcat Park is the perfect reflection of what a community is capable of doing when determined to replace a worn down playground. With the help of Leathers & Associates, everyone in the city of Corvallis had the opportunity go contribute.

"Leathers is committed to having something for any volunteer to do," Hoffman said. "All you need is the desire to volunteer, and you can contribute."

For more information on Leathers & Associates visit [www.leathersassociates.com](http://www.leathersassociates.com) or call 877-564-6464. To learn more about the Corvallis, Ore. playground visit [www.newwildcatpark.org](http://www.newwildcatpark.org).

*The volunteer general coordinator for the project was Mark Hoffman who works at Oregon State University. Hoffman, along with Nason McCullough, helped organize the Corvallis, Ore. community-built playground through Leathers & Associates.*

Today Bob's son Marc owns and runs the firm.

"At this point, we have worked with more than 2,000 communities on volun-

