

FOCUS on Extension

Serving Clackamas County Citizens

Clackamas County Extension Office

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<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/clackamas>

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Thank You Michael Bondi

Welcome to our June 2020 edition of Focus On Extension newsletter. It has been a busy three months with remote education, services, and helping in the community. We are dedicating this edition to an individual who has served this organization and community for over 42 years. The legacy of Michael C. Bondi will live on in story after story. Mike has made a tremendous impact on the Clackamas County, the forestry community, faculty, staff, and families. He is always focused on what is best for others. His leadership grew the Clackamas Extension Service from a small organization to what is now the largest service district in the state. He established an advisory council of community members who are involved in the decision making process as well as providing guidance on the annual budget along with the public budget committee. Mike has lead a team that has been instrumental in designing and developing the plans for a new Extension building. Since we are unable to meet in a large group setting, we have gathered stories from many and want to let them tell of their memories or experiences with Michael Bondi. Please enjoy, and when we are able, we will have a celebration to commemorate his retirement.



Mike, enjoy this edition of Focus on Extension dedicated to you. May you enjoy your retirement to the fullest with your wife, son, and grandchildren.

Leah Sundquist
Administrative Faculty, County Liaison

Mike Inspires Staff and Passion for Service

Upon joining the Clackamas County Extension staff nearly four years ago, I quickly learned of Mike Bondi's deep dedication to OSU Extension and the Clackamas County community. Mike's commitment to serving the community has always been apparent as he has guided and led our Extension team. Mike is a visionary, whether the passion and gleam in his eyes is for the Hopkins Demonstration Forest, the OSU Extension Education Center, inspiring staff with Innovative Funding Grants, or any quality service/support Extension can provide to the community. It has been a privilege to be a part of the Clackamas Extension team under Mike's steadfast leadership. OSU, community members, and our staff have all benefitted from Mike's tremendous work, vision, and passion for service – and will for generations to come.

Marcia McIntyre
Master Gardener Coordinator



Oregon State University
Extension Service
Clackamas County

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He is a Lasting Legacy

I have had the privilege of working with Mike for almost 20 years. He has been a friend and a mentor. I have learned so much from him about how to work within the university system and how decisions are made. My second year on the job, there was a budget issue and the university was unable to fund my position full-time. Mike found funds through the non-profit Forests Forever Inc. (FFI) for me to do some Extension youth forestry programming at the Hopkins Demonstration Forest. This laid the path for FFI to continue providing funds for Extension forestry education. Mike's ideas and partnerships last.



Mike receiving the Friends of 4-H award in 2011.

Mike has made a strong commitment to serve the youth in Clackamas County. He has been a dedicated advocate for 4-H. Following the passage of the service district, Mike was honored as Clackamas County Friend of 4-H. I think if he hadn't been a forester, he would have been a 4-H agent. He loves the kids, and we even convinced him to be a chaperone at 4-H Summer Conference at OSU. He enjoyed mentoring our delegation and was so proud to see several of our 4-Hers receive recognition at the closing ceremony. He deserves to be proud. We wouldn't have the 4-H program we do without his support and dedication. Mike has left a lasting legacy on the OSU Extension Service and Clackamas County.

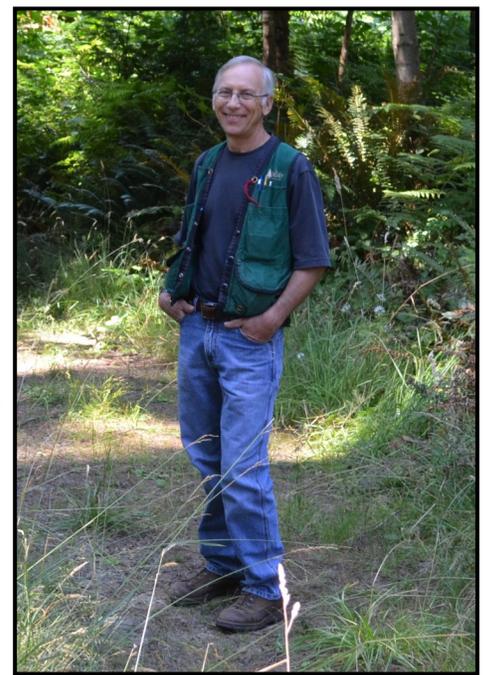
Wendy Hein
4-H Youth Development Faculty

Engaging Speaker and Gentle Giant

I am more than fortunate to have been able to work under Mike for these past 10 years. When I started in 2010, we were part of the planning team for 'The Small Scale Forestry Equipment Show' at Bowman's Tree Farm. I was able to learn about a lot of forestry equipment, and had the opportunity to meet many of the forestry folk that are involved with forestry. In 2011, he took me to help with a Christmas tree spot for [Fox 40 Sacramento Early Morning Show](#) which was cool!

Mike is a very engaging speaker and I have had multiple opportunities to hear him speak at the Woodland Farmer of the Year banquets and the Clackamas County Farm Forestry Association annual meetings. I have appreciated working on the Woodland Notes with him. Mike is a gentle giant, a man of inspiration, a man of vision, hard worker, and a great speaker. He has a great brain and memory for details that I have never seen in anyone else.

Mike, you have worked hard for many years and deserve to just enjoy life. I will miss working under you, for you have been a big part of my time here, working for Extension. Thank you.



Mike at Hopkins Demonstration Forest.

Jean Bremer
Forestry Office Support

Covering Our Communities

Clackamas County community has felt the impact of Mike Bondi's leadership and tenure in Extension in a tremendous number of ways. Over the years, there have been many programs and accompanying sayings which remain with us. One of these, "sharing is caring", completely captures the devotion Mike has displayed with his work at Extension.

Mike and his family have all been part of multiple events over the years. One especially delightful was that early Master Gardeners spring garden fair, when his son, then five years old, sold tomato plants to a couple of hundred visitors at that event. Mike's ever-joyful spouse Connie has been generous to share him and herself, helping to make so many events more wonderful.

Mike's Advisory Council meetings have always been stimulating, through laughter, hard work, and camaraderie, with friendships born thereof. Committee members extending their terms of service for multiple runs is a testament to just how much they enjoyed working on projects with Mike. Many special events at the Clackamas County Extension office and at the North Willamette Research Extension Center have grown to become anticipated "hit" events, each attracting fans and participants who wouldn't consider missing them. The Clackamas County Extension office under Mike's tenure has been a nurturing, expanding, dynamic place of learning for staff, volunteers, and visitors. Everyone who has stepped into that office has left more informed and joyful than they could have imagined, all of which is inspired by the leadership of Mike Bondi.

It's been a privilege and an honor to know such an outstanding Oregon State University employee for all these years which Mike has served.



Mike giving a tour of NWREC on a hay ride.

Elizabeth Howley
Advisory Committee and Extension Volunteer

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Visionary Leading our County

Magnanimity is the virtue of being great of mind and heart, of standing up for what is right, and acting generously for noble purposes beyond oneself. There are few people that I've met in my life who better exemplify the virtue of magnanimity than Mike Bondi. Mike welcomed me to Extension in 2012 as a program assistant, and has helped guide my career for the last eight years to take on more projects and responsibility. Mike is great of mind, acting as a visionary in leading our county program for many years and paving the way for the future. He is also great of heart, caring deeply for each of us, and helping us find ways to collaborate and grow stronger together. I will carry the lessons that Mike has taught me for the rest of my career, with a deep gratitude for all his contributions to our ever-changing world. Thank you, Mike!

*Erin Devlin
Family and Community Health Faculty*

Extension Forestry Leader and Mentor

As an OSU Extension Forester, I have benefited from the leadership and mentorship of Mike Bondi for more than 30 years. I first met Mike on a field site in Clackamas County in 1988 when I was a Research Assistant studying hardwood management options for woodland owners. Working with Mike over the years, I have seen first-hand the huge impact he has had – leading the effort to build Forestry and Christmas Tree Extension, and ultimately Clackamas County Extension to be one of the nation's largest County Extension programs. Clackamas Tree School, Hopkins Demonstration Forest, Master Woodland Managers, and many other programs developed under his leadership have an ongoing impact across generations. Mike's work provides a compelling demonstration of how University research and education can help people and communities on the ground. He showed me what Extension can do and inspired me to become an Extension Agent myself. Thank you Mike, for all you have done to strengthen our community.



*Glenn Ahrens
Forestry Faculty*

Wisdom, Inclusion, and Contagious Passion

Mike, as you enter into retirement, I would like to profess my heartfelt thanks for the years of positive leadership you have given. I haven't met anyone else who has the combined gifts of wisdom, inclusion, and contagious passion for the work we do and you have been the best administrator I've had the pleasure of working for. You've always been so helpful and supportive of me and my young career at Extension, even at times I wasn't brimming with confidence. I'll always remember work we did on the Harvest Dinners and be forever grateful for how you helped me speak in front of the Governor. You've helped me grow professionally over the years I've been with Extension, but I know I'm not alone, because you've created a culture in a growing office that felt like family and have championed each of us. I cannot thank you enough for the guidance that you have provided and wish you only best for your retirement years. Thank you so very much!

*Buffy Rhoades
Family and Community Health Educational Program Assistant*

He Shows Up

My favorite memory of Mike is when we drove together to Corvallis and back to negotiate details about my position. After the meeting, Mike gave me a fist bump to celebrate our successful negotiations. As a supervisor, he has been a strong advocate for me as an Extension faculty. Thank you for showing up when it mattered most.

*Weston Miller
Horticulture Faculty*

Honoring a Legacy

These past almost two years have been a whirlwind of activity for Clackamas County Extension. I am very thankful to be part of this great team of talented and dedicated employees and volunteers. They are actively engaged and willing to share the load of responsibilities. I was also learning a great deal about a very complex educational organization.

Entering my new role in Extension, my first opportunity to meet Mike Bondi was at the NWREC annual Harvest Dinner. I had only started this big job a few days prior and had already heard many wonderful comments about the leader of Clackamas County Extension. When we were first introduced amongst the melee of activity that evening, Mike was extremely gracious and charming. However, we did not enjoy much time chatting because there is a myriad of prep, planning, and running around Mike undertakes in order to make the Harvest Dinner such an outstanding success. New to Extension, I remember how enthusiastic I felt about my new job after the Harvest Dinner had ended while driving home. Not only was I able to meet many colleagues, eat delicious local food, sample OSU-made beer and cheese, schmooze with the governor and other dignitaries, learn about the cutting-edge research taking place at NWREC and across our region, but I finally had a face to put to a name I had heard repeated in so many circles, that of Mr. Mike Bondi. Subsequently, my opinion of the man has grown to be even more impressed by his boundless energy, diverse skills, notable talents and perpetual integrity.



Since then, I have had the sincere pleasure of getting to know Mike much better. There are few people who work as hard as Mike in this organization. Mike is a doer, not a talker. His efficiency, attention to detail, ability to think big, and endless admiration for his employees, volunteers, and community are both noteworthy and genuine. I am very honored to be a part of Clackamas County Extension while never forgetting I have very big shoes to fill. I have learned a great deal from my two years of mentoring from Mike and I promise to put the knowledge he has generously shared with me to good use.

Entering this next phase of Clackamas County's leadership transition with a smooth handoff has been a successful and important transition. I thank Mike and our retiring Office Manager Roxie Applebee for their amazingly effective leadership. Clackamas County Extension has the largest number of employees, the most generous budget, and the most diverse programming compared to the 35 other Extension programs across Oregon. We also will someday have the most beautiful and environmentally-friendly Education Center building, all thanks to Mike's vision, determination, and fiscally responsible administration.

Presently we have created a new team bringing on board our talented Office Manager and Local Liaison Leah Sundquist. I use the word "team" very specifically. Just like an athletic team, we all play different roles and will take on new responsibilities. It takes a collaborative leadership approach to have a team operate at the highest level. During this transition period, Mike has done a wonderful job unifying our employees, local partners, volunteers, county leaders, and university to form a solid and highly functioning team. Thanks to Mike's vision, he has created stronger engagement and alignment in our organization that helps us define and execute important Extension strategies that ultimately benefit the residents of Clackamas County. Please help me in acknowledging and appreciating Mike's major contributions to improving the lives of the people of Clackamas County through the programming available at OSU Extension, NWREC, and Hopkins Demonstration Forest when you see him next.

Angela Sandino
North Willamette Regional Director