

Oregon State University Extension Service

METRO CONNECTION

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Introducing our RECAN member Bruce Bartlett



Bruce Bartlett turned 18 as the Vietnam War raged overseas. It was then "I was forced to confront my morals and ethics," said Bartlett, who became a conscientious objector, refusing to serve in the military during the draft.

As part of the required service that came along with that choice, Bartlett worked at an inner-city Portland food co-op that provided "cheap food, mostly to the old and the poor," he said, and gathered knowledge about healthy eating, cooking and food systems. This service "had a profound effect on me." Bartlett's interest in food, community and giving back spur him to take on various volunteer roles, including becoming an original member of Oregon State University Extension Service RECAN Committee.

Bartlett brings his experience in the Community Participation Organization (CPO) to RECAN. For 20 years, he has been part of his local volunteer-led CPO that meets to discuss transportation, public health, safety, local policy, schools, libraries and more. After participating in the OSU Extension Master Gardener training courses, Bartlett was hooked on the virtues of OSU Extension. "They offer completely free university-level information about food, landscaping and nutrition," he said. "It's such a gift. It helps you be a better person and that is a wonderous thing."



Bartlett brings his knowledge of OSU Extension resources back to his CPO meetings to inform the public about the free resources offered. "The more people around me whose lives are enhanced with available local resources the more my life is enhanced," Bartlett said. "I want people to lead enhanced lives with joy and happiness."

Bartlett has always been a lover of the outdoors, and recalls climbing to the top of 50-foot fir trees and out to the ends of the branches as a child growing up in Washington County. In fact, his favorite job put him up close and personal with nature: he cared for 50 hives of honey bees and sold their sweet byproducts at markets.

Later, after 20 years working at Intel, Bartlett left the company in the 1990s and worked in property management and consulting. Known for a being a musician, Bartlett keeps busy playing the bass guitar, trombone and percussion, hosting weekly musical gathering at his home. He also sings.

But the greatest thing Bartlett has ever done? Raising his daughter, Lily, who is now 26 years old.