

## WATER FOR A THIRSTY DESERT

Dear Friends:

Our experience this year in our partnership with the Oregon Symphony has been like water for a thirsty desert. Life in a rural community is wonderful...fresh air, no crowds, open spaces, beautiful landscapes. While our distance from urban centers limits our exposure to the arts, it does not diminish our need for the arts in our lives. Through our symphony partnership staff, students and our community have come alive with a renewed (and for some, a newfound) enthusiasm for music.

*The Oregon Symphony's Community Music Partnership with Redmond, Ore., is a yearlong residency program. The program includes professional development for teachers, musician visits and full orchestra community concerts. Building community through the arts is the primary goal.*

The symphony musicians have shared their talents, their passion and their knowledge with us and have awakened the seeds of wonder, curiosity and excitement in our students and staff. Through the Percussion Ensemble, Classroom Informances and the Instrument Petting Zoos our students have learned about music history, music appreciation, the mechanics and mood of music, what motivates and inspires musicians, music composition and cultural influences. They have had the opportunity to hear live performances and have been able to play actual instruments. What has resulted is nothing short of pure magic! Our students are abuzz with excitement. They are e-mailing questions to the visiting musicians; they are bringing in instruments from home for sharing. Local musicians have received a huge increase in calls for music lessons. We are even starting up a violin program at our school with parent and staff volunteers and some funding support from the Central Oregon Symphony. Our teachers have participated in workshops and staff development that will help them integrate music education into their instructional programs.

Even in our remote, arid location — and amidst desiccating economic and political challenges — the Oregon Symphony, through its partnership with the Redmond School District, has delivered enriching and energizing waters of inspiration. As a result, our students, teachers and the broader community of Redmond have already begun to respond to this introduction to new educational, aesthetic and cultural joys and opportunities afforded by music. Thank you is simply not enough!

*Linda Seeberg*

Linda Seeberg, Principal  
John Tuck Elementary

