



# NEWSLETTER



**CITY OF YACHATS**

**NOVEMBER 2008**

Visit [www.ci.yachats.or.us](http://www.ci.yachats.or.us) for meeting agendas & minutes, municipal codes, applications and more!

## Quote of the Month

"A gossip is one who talks to you about others; a bore is one who talks to you about himself; and a brilliant conversationalist is one who talks to you about yourself" ~Lisa Kirk



### **Mayor's Message** By Susanne Smith, Mayor

Interestingly I was thinking about gossip as part of this my final Mayor's Message, when a friend sent the following to me after a discussion we had regarding the potential damage that gossip can do. I offer it for your consideration:

*In ancient Greece, Socrates was reputed to hold knowledge in high esteem. One day an acquaintance met the great philosopher and said, "Do you know what I just heard about your friend?"*

*"Hold on a minute," Socrates replied. "Before telling me anything I'd like you to pass a little test. It's called the Triple Filter Test."*

*"Triple filter?"*

*"That's right," Socrates continued. "Before you talk to me about my friend, it might be a good idea to take a moment and filter what you're going to say. That's why I call it the triple filter test. The first filter is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?"*

*"No," the man said, "actually I just heard about it and..."*

*"All right," said Socrates. "So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now let's try the second filter, the filter of Goodness. Is what you are about to tell me*

*about my friend something good?"*

*"No, on the contrary..."*

*"So," Socrates continued, "you want to tell me something bad about him, but you're not certain it's true. You may still pass the test though, because there's one filter left: the filter of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about my friend going to be useful to me?"*

*"No, not really."*

*"Well," concluded Socrates, "if what you want to tell me is neither true nor good nor even useful, why tell it to me at all?"*

This is why Socrates was a great philosopher and held in such high esteem.

Grand Occasions suffered a fire recently which damaged the entire building. Immediately there were offers of all kinds of help from tearing out ruined walls and insulation to a loan of a commercial stove to offers of a place for Mila Niemi to continue her massage therapy business. I consider this to be like the old barn raisings that happened in days gone by. This is an example of neighbor helping neighbor at its very best and my last word on an ongoing effort to define just what is the YACHATS ESSENCE. It defines itself: those who get it just do; those who don't get it just never will.

Thank you all for the last ten years. Believe me when I say that Mike and I both have grown in ways that we never could have imagined. It has been an honor to serve this very special community.

...and just to set the record straight, we are not leaving Yachats because of any one person or action. We are going on a new adventure, which, if you know anything about us, is just what we do.

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**The Councilor's Corner**  
By Joel Evans, City Council  
President

One of the many great things about living in Yachats is that there is no "Establishment" here; no first families. How much you want to get involved in civic or community affairs is pretty much up to you.

When we moved here full-time after being "summer people" for several years a 2nd Street neighbor, Art Tollefson, was helping unload our U-Haul. He casually asked if I might be interested in serving on the Street Commission. I bit. I didn't know that it was an unwritten rule then that if you were on a commission you couldn't get off until you brought in a replacement.

So I began my public career in Yachats as the alternate member of the Streets Commission. This was okay because someone was always absent, so I always got to vote.

Later the Street and Public Works Commissions were merged and I became chair of the combined commissions.

An opening on the Planning Commission came up and I got it. For a time I served on both commissions. During this time I somehow became a member of the Board of the Port of Alsea. There was a shake-up and I found myself chair of that body. I had never caught a crab West Coast Style.

In 1995 there was a vacancy on the City Council and I was appointed to fill it. It seemed as if we were going through a down period in city spirit. This was when nobody filed for mayor, and we had a write-in election.

I taught high school history and civics for 32 years. Here in Yachats I got a chance to "do" it. You know the old saying, "Those who can, do; those who can't, teach." Well in Yachats Sheila, my wife, who taught literature, wrote six books and I who taught government, got to govern.

Three times I asked the people of Yachats if I could keep doing it. Three times they said "Yes."

Thanks, Yachats.

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**Planning Department**  
By Larry Lewis, City Planner

**LAND PARTITION  
APPLICATIONS**

This is the fifth of eight descriptions of different types of land use and building permit applications that the city processes.

**What is a Land Partition?** A land partition is dividing a single parcel of land into two or three parcels of land. The difference between a partition and a subdivision is a subdivision divides a single parcel of land into four or more parcels.

**Land Partition Requirements** - In order to partition land into two or three parcels each parcel must meet the standards of the underlying zoning district. For example, to partition land in the R-1 Residential Zone each parcel must have a minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet, a minimum 60 foot lot width, and a minimum 80 foot lot depth. Each parcel must have legal access in accordance with minimum standards. If there are existing buildings, the buildings must meet minimum setback requirements. There are other partition standards described in Section 9.56 of the Yachats Municipal Code.

**The Process** - A property owner files an application and \$200 fee with the City. Once city staff deems the application complete, notice of the Planning Commission public hearing is published in the paper and mailed to surrounding property owners. A staff report is prepared prior to the public hearing. The Planning Commission receives public testimony and makes a tentative decision at the public hearing. If the Planning Commission grants tentative approval the applicant must hire a land surveyor to prepare the partition map and have it recorded with the Lincoln County Surveyor's Office.

**History of Partition** - From 2002-2008, the City has approved 14 of 17 partition applications.

**CORRECTED NOTICE ABOUT CITY PLANNER HOURS:** Larry Lewis will be in Yachats on Tuesdays from 8:30a-4:30p except the last week of the month. Then he will be here Mondays from 12:30p-4:30p & Tuesdays from 8:30a-12:30p.

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**Public Works**  
**Department**  
 By John McClintock, Public  
 Works Director

2008 has been a very busy year for the Public Works Department.

As if this writing, the Wastewater Plant project is close to 95% complete. The new treatment facility is scheduled to start up in this month and two of the four collection system pump stations are operational with the other two scheduled to be online by the end of this month.

The new Public Works building is scheduled to be completed by the end of this month also, and will provide space inside for Public Works equipment. We have been operating out of two 40' CONEX containers for the past 18 months and everyone is excited to have a permanent roof over their heads.

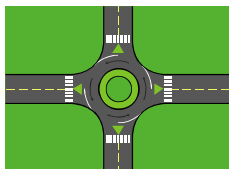
Electrical and operational upgrades have been completed at the Water Treatment Plant to keep up with Federal and State requirements for drinking water.

Monitoring is taking place on the Yachats River to follow the agreement with the State to exercise the City water rights.

Waterline replacement and upgrades have been completed with the installation of 1000' of 6" Class 200 pipe on Highway 101. We also have plans to upgrade Reeves Circle which will provide increased pressure and fire flow. All projects have been identified in the Yachats Water Master Plan.

The Storm Water Master Plan Addendum has been completed and Public Works has started on projects identified in the plan.

In November and December, Public Works will be cleaning water reservoirs. Flushing of distribution lines will take place between November 17<sup>th</sup> and November 21<sup>st</sup>.



**Public Works & Streets**  
**Commission Report**  
 By Walt Weyand, PW&S  
 Commission Chair

A major function of the Public Works & Streets Commission is to ensure water and sewer rates are adequate to meet the City's financial requirements. The Commission continues to monitor, each month, the actual revenues received from water and sewer billing, comparing the revenues to projected numbers as well as City expenses. The Commission feels current rates are adequate, but may require revision if the projected financial recession has a marked negative impact on revenues.

A Storm Drain Study is under way to ensure Yachats' storm drains are adequate to handle heavy winter rain events, and if not, where improvements are needed. The study will be presented to the City Council in November, along with a request that a consultant be hired to prepare a System Development Charge (SDC) recommendation.

Commission members set up the City's annual Clean Sweep event this past June, and Commission members assisted the community in filling three large dumpsters with discards.

Eight new public litter containers are soon to be set in place by Dahl Disposal. The PW&S members recommended that City Council accept Dahl's generous offer to furnish them free of charge.

Commission members continue to monitor the City's water quality reports from Public Works Director, John McClintock. Members recently requested that periodic water tests monitor the level of aluminum. Director McClintock has compiled the data and reported that there are no detectable aluminum levels.

At the City Council's request, the Commission has identified two State publications that can be used to educate visitors on bicycle and pedestrian safety, as well as applicable laws for vehicle drivers. The Council has been asked to procure a quantity of each brochure for city-wide distribution.



**Transparency in**  
**Government**  
 By Greg Scott, City Councilor

Central to the concept of govern-

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ment in Oregon is the principle that the public should have free and open access to public records and the process of governance. This is why Oregon has an open meeting law that requires that public bodies like city councils and commissions conduct their business discussion with the public present and that a record be maintained for anyone that wants to review the discussion.

The City of Yachats maintains records of all public documents and makes these available at City Hall. If someone wants access to older meeting minutes, studies, reports, agendas, and other public records, they have to go to City Hall and request them. A staff person goes to a filing cabinet or a box and sorts through a stack of documents to locate the requested material.

Today, there is a better way. The City of Yachats now offers a searchable database option for public records. All that is required is a computer with Internet access. The link for the City's new document search service is <http://YachatsDocuments.info>. If someone doesn't have a computer or Internet access, they can use the public computers at the Yachats Public Library. The volunteers will soon be trained to assist people with record searches. Links to the search site have been added to the Library public machine desktops.

Records for 2008 are being added to the database and the plan is to add documents back to the year 2000. A limited number of older records will be added as time permits. The site also includes on-line instructions for searches, examples, and a frequently asked questions (FAQ) section. Every effort has been made to make the search process logical and natural. Because documents are fully searchable, you can query a name, a street, a date, or any unique word or phrase present in the document. There are currently 19 categories users can fill in to filter their searches and they may use one or a combination of categories. The more filters included, the narrower the search becomes.

We would like to hear comments about this new service. E-mail can be sent to [cityhall@ci.yachats.or.us](mailto:cityhall@ci.yachats.or.us) or send a letter to City Hall at PO Box 345, Yachats, OR 97498. Feel free to provide suggestions for improvements as well as comments.



**Commons Management Task Force**  
**By Ron Brean, Commons Management Task Force Member**

One of the important responsibilities of the City Council is to find ways to efficiently handle the City's business. From time to time it is useful to evaluate the structure and staffing of the City's various programs. Do we have the right positions? Are the reporting relationships appropriate? Are we doing the work right and are we doing the right work? It is neither a glamorous nor easy task, but one that any responsible managing body should do once in a while. Our Council recently revisited that responsibility.

A part of that review process led to an exploration of the primary purpose and function of the Yachats Commons. Is it primarily an events center or is it primarily a community center? How do events centers differ from community centers? How is the workload different between the two? Which management model or use pattern should we seek for the Commons? What is working well and what should perhaps be done differently?

Through the Parks and Commons Commission, these topics were explored in great detail. The Commission's recommendations were passed on to the Council. The Council decided that the Commons is a very valuable resource as a community center. From time to time, when not being used in that capacity, it also serves as an events venue. It was not felt that marketing and promoting the facility were essential for the Commons to achieve its primary purpose. More crucial are the tasks of assisting in the community's use of the Commons and "managing" the events that find their way to us. As a result, the Council opted to discontinue the Commons Coordinator position which was largely responsible for marketing and promotion, and explore other means of fulfilling the Commons potential, and need for coordination and management.

The Commission recommended the establishment of a task force to consider how this change should be undertaken. The Council accepted that

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recommendation and appointed members of the Parks & Commons Commission, representatives of the non-profit Friends of the Yachats Commons, Yachats Youth and Family Activities Program advocates, and interested citizens to the project. The members of the Commons Task Force includes: Debbie Jackson, Greg Jones, Cy Kauffman, Robin Link, Don Niskanen, Kathy Perkins, Greg Scott, Sue Smith, Leon Sterner, and me. Our mission is to shepherd the Commons through the transition using existing staff and volunteers, and formulating a management strategy for the Commons into the future.

As we have moved from the former model toward a different one, the Task Force has been pleased with the smoothness of the transition. City staff and volunteers from Friends of the Yachats Commons have spectacularly risen to the challenge. There have been no “hiccups” that have not been expeditiously resolved, and in most cases things are running smoother than ever. The Commons Calendar is being updated regularly and is available online at [www.ci.yachats.or.us](http://www.ci.yachats.or.us). The rental request form and standard rental contract have been improved. Processes have been reviewed, tweaked, or invented to make the rental process smoother than ever before. Volunteer staffing has been well coordinated and has proven to be available when necessary. On-call volunteers have been provided with a cell phone so that users have access to help in the event of unforeseen glitches. We have also improved the process for getting feedback from the Commons users and updated the Commons Policy Manual. In other words, our first priority (an interim operating plan to transition to a new model as smoothly as possible) has been successfully achieved.

What remains is to recommend a staffing and management structure for addressing the various workloads associated with a successfully operating community center. We have worked through the task list and begun grouping the chores into functional components. At our next meeting we will hopefully finalize a workload organization chart and begin evaluating various methods of addressing the identified work for the long term. We recognize that, as always, there will be a strong element of volunteerism in helping to manage the Commons. Therefore we will be seeking to better define the volunteer recruiting and training program to be sure that the needs of Commons users can be met. We

are hopeful that we will make a set of recommendations to the Council in the near future.



## **Yachats Library Receives Sculpture**

**By Marie Green, Library Commission Chair**

The Yachats Public Library is displaying a magnificent new sculpture by Jurgen Eckstein.

Carved out of wood, it is named Consciousness, and is the gift of former Yachatian, R.J. Riggs. Riggs is a Princeton, NJ published author with a new novel out in December.

The eye-catching sculpture features a masculine face from one angle and a female face as you move around it for another look. A wonderful addition to our library!

Thanks also go to all those who donate barely read new books, DVDs, magazines, and to the local artists whose works grace our walls. We are blessed by all of the support from our local patrons, and visitors.



## **Little Log Church & Museum**

**By Mary Crook, Events Coordinator**

The sounds of geese high above and the sight of pelicans in the bay tell us—*Yikes!*—the year is nearing its end. It's been a good year at the Little Log Church and Museum. We've gotten a coat of paint inside and out, the garden is beautiful, and the sanctuary seems to pulsate with good feelings from the events that have taken place there this past year.

The museum has been host to over 20 weddings, 3 anniversary renewal celebrations (not counting the mega-celebration on Valentine's Day), an Elderhostel visit and a tour group, 2 beautiful memorial services, and most recently the addition of a regular meditation group that meets on Wednesday evenings.

Last month we were pleased to host our second annual Blessing of the Animals in the museum's Garden of Saint Francis. Anyone walking or driving

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by may have done a quick double-take, seeing a llama, ten dogs of myriad breeds, the two miniature goats from the firehouse, a bearded dragon, two sleek rats, and numerous humans standing in the garden. Three cats were blessed *in absentia*, because, well, you know how cats can be.

Before the year's end two other events will be held at the Little Log Church to which everyone is cordially invited: Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. will be our annual Opening Ceremonies, kicking off Yachats Winter Celebration, followed by the fabulous Sweet Adelines concert at the Ladies Club to put everyone in the holiday spirit. On Sunday afternoon, December 7<sup>th</sup>, will be the Little Log Church's Christmas Concert. Check the City's Calendar or flyers around town for the exact time.



### **In the Garden** **By Jodi Sones, Landscape Coordinator**

The grounds at the Little Log Church and Museum continue to improve. The City took out the stump, and I have to commend them. They did an excellent job and didn't even ruffle a blade of grass on the lawn.

Now I will be getting the large hole left by that stump ready to put the pitcher plant in that was left for us, plus another variety that was donated recently by Betty Bahn. Thanks so much Betty. It will be a great addition along with the other we already have. Then I will be searching for a good, reliable source to purchase the Darlingtonia (giant pitcher plant) to put in a part of the bog I will make there.

In front of the bog there will be a nice new bench. Work on that bench will begin as soon as I clear that area. A donation from the Seal Rock Garden Club helped to pay for the bench—another thanks go to them.

Most of the work on the grounds right now is fall clean-up and putting things to bed for the winter. If you happen to be in our neighborhood while I am working, please stop by and say hello.

Next month I hope to tell you about more exciting happenings on your Little Log Church and Museum grounds.

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### **Si Se Puede! Spanish and English Group for Everyone (Todos)!**

Join us at the Yachats Youth and Family Activities Program (YYFAP) every Miercoles (Wednesday) from 6-8 p.m. for a Spanish and English conversation group! If you want to brush up, or dive into, either language, this is the time and the place. The group is free, the atmosphere is relaxed, and the opportunities for learning and communicating are abundant. All ages and levels are welcome, and activities, books, and comida (food) are all provided. The group is guided by volunteer Jessica Jackson, a communication enthusiast (a.k.a. chatterbox) in both languages (with 21+ years experience in English, and 3+ years experience in Spanish.) Bring your amigos (friends), preguntas (questions), and entusiasmo (enthusiasm). Bonus points if you know how to make a piñata. The group is located at the Yachats Youth and Family Activities Program in the basement of the Yachats Commons. For más información, call YYFAP at 547-4599 or Jessica at 272-1070.



### **Your City STILL Needs You!** **By Susanne Smith, Mayor**

The City of Yachats still has openings for volunteers on three commissions. Commission membership requires primary (do you vote here?) residency within the City limits. For more information call City Recorder Nancy Batchelder at City Hall (541) 547-3565.

- Public Works and Streets (1 opening) Meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
- Planning Commission (1 opening). Meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
- Budget Committee (1 opening). Meetings are annually in May.



### **Town Tidbits**

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Indoor Yard Sale and Flea Market Saturday,  
November 15 from 9a-4p inside Yachats  
Commons.

SPACES AVAILABLE 270-9363

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