

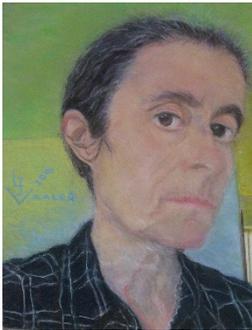


FEBRUARY 2021

Newsletter

Physical Address: 501 HWY 101 N | Mailing Address: PO Box 345 YACHATS, OR 97498
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OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY—FRIDAY: 9AM-4PM (Closed 12N-1P)

Mayor's Message



By: Mayor Leslie Vaaler

Your Council is hard at work, but we are looking for a fifth member to fill our vacancy. Applications are available online and are due on February 12 at 1 PM. We plan to interview applicants on February 16. I encourage you to attend our February 4 meeting and to

imagine how you could contribute as a Councilor. Feel free to reach out with any questions or with requests for a paper copy of the application.

In January, Council considered recommendations from three of our commissions:

Public Works and Streets: Council modified our administrative policy relating to the uncontrolled loss of municipal treated water. A portion of the new policy reads: *Any metered water service customer may apply for partial relief of the cost of water lost as a result of unexpected excessive usage. However, one adjustment every five years per owner of property is allowed.*

Library: Council authorized an application for a two-year membership in the Oregon Digital Library Consortium. Starting July 1, membership should make possible access to nearly 90,000 items, including ebooks, audiobooks, and videos. The Friends of the Yachats Library have agreed to apply for a Trust Management Grant which would cover the entire cost of the membership.

Planning: We voted to update code relating to hazard mitigation. We are striving to manage development in areas subject to geological hazards in a manner that

protects our community and our natural resources. We asked the Planning Commission to give further consideration to a proposed lighting ordinance, a move which was supported by Planning Commission members. *I urge you to share your thoughts on marine lighting with the Council and with our Planning Commission.*

Our fourth commission is **Parks and Commons**. On January 30, 2011, Council celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the city's acquisition of the Commons building. *Next time you are passing by the Commons, rejoice in our thirty years of ownership—and let Council and the Parks and Commons Commission know your hopes for the next thirty years!*

Lance Bloch is the new chair of our Planning Commission, Linn West now leads Public Works and Streets, and Dawn Keller chairs Parks and Commons. David Rivinus continues as Library Commission chair. I want to thank all four of them, and to recognize the important work our commissions do! In addition to the vacancy on Council, we also have vacancies on several of our commissions and committees. If you are interested in serving on any of them, I encourage you to fill out a volunteer application.

Council spent most of our inaugural work session discussing staffing. We subsequently held an extra January work session to further discuss this important topic. We made the decision to take steps toward moving our planning services to a local planner hired directly by the city. There emerged a consensus on Council that we should have an in-house finance position, as well as a consensus that we should return to written minutes. Among the topics needing further consideration is how we can best provide effective code enforcement. In addition, Council seems destined to have conversations about the City Manager position. I welcome your constructive suggestions!

The Code Enforcement Corner

By: Matt Frank

Hello Citizens of Yachats! I would like to take a second to thank many of you for the warm greetings I received from many of you after last month's newsletter. Thank you for making me feel welcome!

I would like to take this opportunity to educate some of our citizens that might not be familiar with resources that are available to you at the touch of a button or the click of a mouse.

First and foremost, we have a Code Enforcement Hotline that is available to receive complaints 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Once these complaints are made, they then come straight to me and I will investigate the next time I am scheduled to work in City Hall. The phone number for this hotline is 541-265-1963.

We also have our Request Tracker software that, in my opinion, is the best way to stay up to date on your complaint. When you file a complaint using the software, it will keep you up to date with progression on the case. Anytime that I receive complaints this way, I attempt to reach out during my first 8-hour shift of the week. I use this software for the case file and you will receive real time updates via email of any information that can be released to the public.

The link for the Request Tracker can be found on the City of Yachats website, <http://yachatsoregon.org/RequestTracker.aspx>.

Last but certainly not least, is access to the Yachats Municipal Code. This can be found on the City of Yachats website at www.qcode.us/codes/yachats/. I encourage all citizens to look through the code and if you have any questions or need clarification of any part of the code, feel free to reach out to me and I can help you through it.

Thank you and I hope you all have a great month.

Yachats Pantry

By: Pam Luderitz

Because of your generous donations of time, money, and food we fed 1738 people in 2020!! For many of those laid off or having reduced hours we were a lifeline for so many families. Many, many people have said how they never thought they would be using a food pantry, they were all so very grateful that we had a pantry here in town. Many people who used the pantry donated back saying that they wanted to help others like they had been helped.

Again, a huge thank you to our volunteers, we live in such a wonderful, giving village. We continue to have more new volunteers and we appreciate each and every one. Happy, healthy New Year to everyone



Little Log Church & Museum



By: Mary Crook

Last month our Little Log Church had an opportunity to participate in the national ringing of church bells on Tuesday, January 19th, which recognized the nearly 400,000 victims of Covid 19 in the U.S. Then president-elect Joe Biden requested that churches around the country ring their bells at 5:30 p.m. eastern time to acknowledge their passing. Unfortunately, our carillon expert only heard of this plan the morning of the 19th, and he was not sure he would be able to get there in time to program the carillon to toll by 2:30 p.m. Pacific time. But he said he would try. He called fellow board member Mary Crook to let her know of Biden's request. Mary said if he couldn't make it in time she had an idea: So at exactly 2:30 p.m. she stood at attention in the garden by the St. Francis statue and struck her Tibetan singing bell every ten seconds for five minutes. The beautiful sound of the bell vibrated and resonated throughout the neighborhood in solemnity. So, Yachats was part of the national network of churches unified at a single moment to honor the many victims of the pandemic.

We want to update you on our fundraising efforts regarding the Log Church restoration. Donations are still coming in from generous supporters of our city's historical treasure. As of the end of last month 117 donors have contributed to the fund, and pledges for future donations have been made. Fundraising coordinator Carl Miller created a "Giving Tuesday" account through Facebook, and that has generated a healthy response. Thank you, thank you for your caring and generosity!

Yachats Library

By: David Rivinus

Change is coming to our Library. It is not being initiated by Yachats, but rather, by evolving laws governing library affairs in the State of Oregon. Even if we choose to do nothing, our library's State standing will be different in about one year.

If we ignore the new laws, then we will lose our status as a state-recognized public library. Along with that loss, we will compromise our ability to use services that we are now hoping to take advantage of. The most important of these is access to an online program that can increase our library's offerings nearly tenfold; currently, we are the only library in Lincoln County not subscribed to this program.

The biggest change we would need to make to maintain our state standing would be to hire a part-time, professional librarian. This is the most complex issue facing our current Library Commission. We have much research to do—weighing multiple ideas and trying to find a path forward that will be the most helpful, while ruffling the fewest feathers. As we proceed, we will keep you informed occasionally through these newsletter updates. As always, we also welcome your input.



Ever Wonder About the History of the Commons?

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Have you ever wondered about the history of the Commons? The View the Future has completed research on the early history of the Commons. We will be featuring a segment of their extensive article each month. And for those of you who just can't wait, you can see the whole article at View the Future's website: <https://viewthefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/History-of-the-Yachats-Commons-Final-.pdf>

Relevant History Before The Acquisition of the Yachats School

The "Newbies"

Interviews with long-term locals revealed that in the late 1960s and early 70s Yachats valley received new residents: younger people escaping to what they felt was a simpler life, some of whom came for the "hippie" lifestyle. They wanted seclusion and a place to live off the land. Their lack of experience led to most, if not all, leaving after a short time. A severe winter probably was a factor. Later, in the mid-70s, a different type of individuals moved to Yachats River Valley and Tenmile Creek Area. They also were inexperienced about how to live in this pristine and wild area, but they came from professional backgrounds with valuable skills and knowledge to offer. More importantly, they realized they were inexperienced, were open to learning, and, most of all, desired a sense of community. At the outset, the established residents and the "newbies" seemed to have little in common. Established residents had limited traditional education, were fairly entrenched in their ways, and were generally more conservative, but they knew a great deal about living in this area. Some had been here for generations. The "newbies" were mostly liberals and brought in new ideas. Unlikely, but lasting, friendships were formed. Jim Adler speculated that the established residents were curious about the new residents and felt their knowledge and expertise were appreciated. "Newbies" learned from the long-term residents who helped them establish a sustainable way of life, and "newbies" offered needed help to the established residents. Neighbor helping neighbor was the norm. There was no problem or emergency that could not be worked out or solved with these friendships. The one rule was that it was a good idea not to talk politics. November 4, 2020

Stacy Smith and Chris Graamans' wedding reception at Tenmile was an example of the community coming together. Everyone was invited and came. Long-term residents wore their finest church garb and watched, fascinated, as belly dancers entertained. Even the county sheriff deputy stopped by to find out what the racket was all about, joined in the celebration and partook of the delicious potluck. For a short while a buying club was formed to serve the needs of interested residents in the area. The only place for the truck to park with the food for residents to pick up was in the grocery store parking lot. Not wanting to compete with the grocery store, the buying club stopped only to return bigger and better after the City of Yachats purchased the building.

As the newcomers established themselves as part of the greater Yachats community, they rallied to welcome more "newbies" who moved here. Tom Smith and Leon Sterner were always the first to seek out these newcomers, greet them, and help them. Tom Smith's name came up again and again in these interviews as the first to help, first to lead, first to solve problems. His name is paramount in the book *Saving Big Creek*, and his leadership is evident in the saving the Yachats Elementary School and the establishment of the Commons.

Yachats Elementary School

Prior to 1930, local historian Lee Green stated a one-room schoolhouse existed east of Highway 101 and a one-room school for high schoolers existed one mile up the Yachats River Road. In 1927 and again in 1929, the Lincoln County School District was bequeathed two pieces of property for the purpose of building and operating a public school, grades 1 through 12. That initial two pieces were about .7 acres. The 3-room building was erected in 1930 and was expanded several times through 1968 to accommodate the student numbers and academic needs. The final acreage to the west of the school (38 lots) was acquired for \$4,799 in 1948. By the early 1970's the 9th through 12 grades did not enroll enough students and the older students were bused to high school in Waldport. (Tom Smith of Tenmile was the last bus driver.) The elementary school continued but by 1976 dwindling enrollments caused the School District to question keeping the elementary school open.

Each classroom contained two grade levels. The library was what is now room 3 in the Commons. One of the interviewees, Billie Jo Smith, taught 5th and 6th grades at the Commons. Billie Jo was also the music teacher. She played piano, but teaching music was not her professional background. She winged it. Her teaching assistant Jackie Martine said, "Billie Jo became my mentor." Tom Smith, Billie Jo's husband, drove the school bus from what is now the Oregon House to Waldport and back with their toddler in tow until she started first grade. They also put together the Christmas pageant. Every student participated and more than 200 people came. It was a most popular event and brought together locals from all around south county.

Maintenance of the Commons building was a constant challenge. When the school needed to be repainted Lions Club stepped up. The name of the paint color was "Surprise," and it was a bright chartreuse literally glowing in the dark. With the extra paint, they painted the bathrooms chartreuse too. It was frightening. Yes, the Lions repainted it, but the bathrooms stayed that color years after the city bought the building.

The school building had always been a place to hold events and bring community together. Few people today are aware that the first Yachats Arts and Crafts Festival was held in 1971. Back then it was called the "Bottle Benders Fair". Home crafts were featured. (Bottle bending is technically a glass-slumping art.) One artist glued rocks together and called his art, "rock groups". Another sold boxes that said on the cover, "three-piece chicken dinner". When opened, there were three kernels of corn in them. All sold. These early fairs, like now, occupied every classroom in the school. When Jim Adler and his wife, Ursula, moved to the Yachats River Valley in the mid-70's, he and artist, Garrett Smith, whose shop is now the Mercantile, took on the task of "professionalizing" the fair and hence, the Arts and Crafts Festival came to be.

In 1983, with only 35 students attending the elementary school, the district closed the school. Protests from the community ensued with even the children picketing, but it did not change the school board's decision. (Information for this section, in part, is from Claire Hall's talk, "The History of Yachats" presented for the 50th/100th anniversary of Yachats, July 17, 2016.)

Wonderful parties were held, many at Tenmile. Led by Tom and Billie Jo Smith, the favorites were the Halloween and Thanksgiving celebrations. Planning for Halloween went on for months. A scary scenario was set up between the Smiths and "newbie" Don Niskanen, who was renting a property to the north. These events were well attended

From the mid 80's to 1990 the school district continued rent the building to locales for events and parties. The "newbies" arranged to rent Yachats Elementary School space sponsoring events including dances and potlucks, Halloween parties and Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas celebrations and New Year's parties. The Arts and Crafts Festival organizers also continued to rent the space. Active and socially conscious community members, they wanted to make use of the building for community purposes. These creative and motivated locals envisioned a future for the building even as it continued to deteriorate.

A Call to Volunteer!

The City Council, Planning, Parks and Commons, and Public Works and Streets Commissions all have vacancies.

Contact City Hall at cityhall@yachatsoregon.org to learn how to apply!



Yachats City Council Vision

Our village is a place where natural resources are valued and protected, where diversity is celebrated, and where a vibrant economy and sense of community pride create and recreate a living spirit. Yachats cares not just for its citizens' basic needs, but also supports them in their efforts to excel mentally, physically, artistically, and spiritually. It is a community with an enduring sense of itself.

Adopted: April 2, 2009

February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 City Council Work Session and Regular Meeting @ 930A Public Works & Streets Commission @ 2P	5	6
7	8	9 Emergency Preparedness Committee @ 2P	10	11 Planning Commission Special Mtg @ 2P	12	13
14	15 City Hall Closed President's Day	16 City Council Special Mtg @ 900A Planning Commission Work & Regular Session @ 2P/3P	17 Finance Committee @ 10A City Council @ 2P	18 Parks & Commons Commission Meeting @ 2P	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						



To Attend the Zoom meetings, go to www.YachatsOregon.org and scroll down to UPCOMING EVENTS And click the Calendar event you are interested in.



- * Having issues logging into Zoom?
- * Have questions or feedback?
- * Find a typo?
- * Want a quick tutorial on the website?

As changes can occur, subscribe to NOTIFY ME for meeting changes and Agenda/Meeting Material availability

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