



Newsletter

OCTOBER 2012

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings!

What a wonderful, sunny summer we had! Even with the abrupt and untimely closing of the café and the encroaching of the ocean, this past season was a hit in so many ways: the Saturday Market, in its second season, was a perfect start to each weekend (market founder Nancy Hadley is to be congratulated on her successful brainchild); our ocean had a change of heart in late-summer and provided an abundance of sand for our strolling; the golf course stayed dry and playable into mid-October; and amazingly, all the big events of summer and fall were held under dry skies.

But as I write this letter, the rain has finally arrived in Neskowin and it is time to get ready for winter and to plan for next year.

Since it is very quiet in the village, be sure to secure your home by disconnecting and storing hoses, cleaning those gutters, and having someone in Neskowin check on your home after a freeze or storm. The raccoons are getting smarter, so securing the vents under your home will deter them from living under your house over the winter. Recently there have been several thefts of electronics, of fishing gear, and of items in unlocked cars. There are no leads as to who is doing the stealing so use common sense and be vigilant. The store has, again, changed operators. They may remodel over the winter, and if so, do not plan on them re-opening until early spring. If something changes it will be posted on the website.

I hope the memories of this summer sustain you and lead to your return to Neskowin next year!

Pam Rowland
NCA President

NESKOWIN GOLF SCRAMBLE

By Debby Gerrish

When one talks of golf tournament results the usual question is, who were the winners? In this case, The Neskowin Community Association is the biggest winner. The tournament showed a profit of \$5,412.65. That is a nice sum of money for the association to receive, and as you know, that profit wouldn't have happened without the help and participation of so many of you.

We had 18 teams who played; the Crowell team won low gross and the Voorhies team won low net. Raffle prizes were spectacular thanks to Susan Amort. Huge amounts of raffle tickets were sold and many happy people walked away with exactly what they had hoped for. The big auction item of the weekend was a ten day stay at Jodi Toll's house in Bali that she so generously donated.

A big thank you to the many local businesses and friends for your donations of time, raffle items, and sponsorship that helped to make this a successful event.

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*Farewell
to summer
2012*

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*Annual Bike Ride to Wave Goodbye to the Summer Crowd
Photo by: Kacey Joyce*

THE NESKOWIN FARMERS' MARKET

By Nancy Hadley

The Neskowin Farmers' Market ended its 2012 season on September 29th. The market was wildly successful and we would like to thank the local community for their tremendous support throughout the summer. For those of you who were able to participate in this wonderful shopping extravaganza, I think you realize how fortunate we are to have such a solid selection of quality vendors. These people worked hard to provide us with a delightful selection of fresh produce and goods that were warmly received.

Most of the people I've talked with did their weekly shopping at our market, many arriving before our 9 o'clock opening and hanging around for an hour or so to catch up on the local news. It was truly a happy gathering place for us.

I'd like to thank our market board members, Patty Hall and Peggy Kellow, for their time, input, and wisdom. We will be having a post-season potluck in November to review the season and look ahead to next year. We're looking forward to another great year and again, thanks for your support and encouragement.

THE MESSENGERS AND THEIR DUTY

By Hope Hitchcock

"When you move to Neskowin, get a P.O. Box right away," my landlady said, "the post office is where everyone hangs out."

Really? Wait, really?

At best, post offices were dreary and frustrating, at worst...well, the site of shootings.

I did as I was told though and it was obvious from the start that the Neskowin Post Office is unlike any other.

It's a pleasant little building, the rows of snug boxes promise a letter, a Netflix DVD, the latest People magazine (don't blush, you're not alone), or best yet, the coveted yellow slip of a package alert. There's a bulletin board with notices for Book Sales, Bake Sales, and Plant Sales alongside those for Fire Protection Meetings, Tsunami Preparedness Class, and the occasional plaintive notes on a Lost Phone, Watch, or Ring.

I have four tiny delightful neighbors who will always offer to escort me to the post office, if only to make a selection from the golden candy dish. But who is leaving us said gifts and singing out their greetings from behind the blue Dutch door? That would be



Marcie and Gary Howard. The very best of the Neskowin Post Office.

They remember your name, your box number, and whether or not your dog likes a treat. Gary will rubber band your mail so it's easier to carry. Marcie will find a nickel in her purse if you're short stamp money. And always, they will smile the biggest and brightest smiles around, magically brightening your day and reminding you that you just might live in the sweetest little spot on Earth.

A few years back, Neskowin came close to losing its post office. Gary and a friend planted themselves at the mail dropbox for two weeks and tried to drum up concern, maybe even find a new postmaster. The post has served a vital role in Neskowin since the very early days. In fact, the village's first postmaster, Sarah Page, ran the post office from her home and is responsible for naming Proposal Rock, Burley Rock, and Neskowin itself.

Gary and Marcie were so convinced of its importance to the community, they decided they would run it. Why, prior to arriving here, they ran a little corner shop for thirteen years, it couldn't be that much harder! And hadn't they worked together for thirty years, doing all sorts of amazing things, not least among them building houses?

Marcie wasn't afraid of a little paperwork. She put in a bid and cited her ability to run her own successful business. At the end of the day though, she's convinced they won because she promised a 'twofer' deal: herself as postmaster and her husband Gary as her trusty volunteer. In March, they will celebrate their third year running the post office together.

Even with their full load of postal responsibilities, they were still kind enough to let me linger at the counter and pester them with questions as they went about their duties.

First off, what about the candy? The candy dish was in existence before they got there and they wisely saw fit to carry on the tradition. Most of it is donated, (now's a good time to do just that Dear Reader, it's on sale at Safeway), and they bring in back-up peppermints for low days. A note on postquette: while everyone is welcome to the candy, it is considered VPT, (Very Poor Taste), to leave your wrapper on the counter. Likewise, any peppermint you deem unsatisfactory should be escorted to the trash and not left, wet and used, on the counter or in the dish.

Marcie and Gary, like most people who take their jobs seriously, do in fact dream about the mail. Marcie sees

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Community
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letters flying at her fast and furious, just like the scene in Harry Potter. Gary dreams of mail going in the wrong box and they both dream about too many boxes piling up, something that actually happens from time to time and especially during the holiday season. Even tiny Neskowin has a holiday season. It starts mid-October, and goes steady for a few months. There have been days when they've filled their back room with packages and then stuffed the bathroom as well.

When I asked about the ratio of junk mail and bills to personal mail, Marcie stopped me. "We don't call it junk mail anymore," she said. "It's bulk mail and it's the stuff that keeps the post office running. I would say that we're probably at about 80/20 for bills and bulk to personal. That's just my 'SWAG' though...my Scientific-Wild-Ass-Guess."

That's the thing about Marcie, she is as funny as she is charming. Folks stop by to get their mail, ask about the latest on Hawk Creek Café, or comment on the weather. Or to tease and be teased by Gary, who's always good for a joke and even better with a kind and concerned word. "We've seen a lot of great people go through some big changes here," he said. "But you know what, some folks have moved in with their kids or to a facility, and we'll still get a postcard from 'em from time to time!"

Gary and Marcie even have a box for post office keepsakes. Just recently a visitor came in with a drivers license found on the beach. Gary mailed it to the address printed on the ID and a couple of days later, he and Marcie received the nicest note from its owner, praising all the good people of Neskowin. Their keepsake box is filling up.

Even with all the jokes, news, and friends stopping by, Marcie and Gary run a tight ship. They have to. While they are definitively not government employees, something the government has made very clear from the beginning, lest they get a hankering for government pay and benefits, they do have to answer to the USPS and that means accounts balanced to the penny every day.

Can the post office survive? Marcie thinks most small branches are headed the way of privatization or will eventually face closure. She's learned a lot about the rules and regs of the USPS since taking on our little post office. New stuff every day even. One thing in particular strikes her as especially important to make note of. "The USPS has never received any government funding, but one of the things crippling the service is that the government requires it to pre-fund retirement."

Also, the stamp you use for first class mail? You can think of it as buying a roundtrip ticket for a one way voyage. It covers the price of a return trip should one be necessary. Still, Marcie is quick to point out that

we have one of the most efficient systems with the cheapest stamp rate in the industrialized world.

If an envelope comes in from Hong Kong addressed to a box that doesn't exist and a person nowhere on record, that envelope goes back to Hong Kong. If your aunt sends you a birthday card and transposes your box number? Gary and Marcie will get it to you. If you wanna drop off a note for a fellow Neskowiner, be their guest, but it's gotta have a stamp on it.

When I asked Marcie if she felt a sense of valor about being the postmaster, what with the whole "neither snow, nor rain, nor wind" creed, she smiled and said, "You know, it's more like I feel there's something sacred about the mail. The little envelope that looks so insignificant to us, well, you might be changing someone's life in getting it to them safely."

The Neskowin Post Office is open Monday through Friday 9AM to 12PM and Saturdays 9AM to 11AM. Support our local branch and purchase stamps (cash or check only) from Marcie and Gary!

WATER AND SEWER OFFICES RELOCATE

The **Neskowin Regional Water District** and the **Neskowin Regional Sanitary Authority** are now in new offices at the entrance to South Beach. Both offices are at **47880 South Beach Road**. All other contact info for each district remains the same.

Sewer—Neskowin Regional Sanitary Authority:
PO Box 383, Neskowin, 97149
503-392-3404 Office | 503-392-3257 Plant
503-801-1104/503-801-1724 after hours emergency
nrsa@oregoncoast.com

Water—Neskowin Regional Water District:
PO Box 823, Neskowin, 97149
503-392-3966 | nrwd@embarqmail.com
www.nrwd.embarqspace.com

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*On the
move*

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NESKOWIN VALLEY SCHOOL

By Julie Fiedler

Thanks to all of you who attended NVS's 30th annual Harvest Festival on October 6. It was a beautiful, sunny Saturday and people thronged the school and playground for old-fashioned fun. Neskowin's own Donna Jose and her Side Effects jammed most of the day and new Lincoln City resident 'Laura Green the Juggling Queen' gave kids and adults free rein with juggling supplies. Delicious treats, art vendors, a Corvus Landing Farm booth, a petting zoo, kids' activities, a book sale, and a silent auction rounded out the activities. Special thanks go to those of you who supplied items for the auction or bid on them—we really appreciate your support of NVS!

The NVS ocean studies I mentioned in last week's newsletter continue to expand. Though our visit to the Ocean Observatories research ship Thompson was postponed due to mechanical problems, a presentation to the whole school by Dr. Bill Busch of Neskowin whetted our appetites to get on board this spring. He narrated video footage of the seafloor where the Pacific City fiber-optic cable now resides and showed photographs of some of the newly discovered life forms that exist through chemo- rather than photo-synthesis. The school recently received very welcome support from the Wheeler and Autzen Foundations for classroom computers and projectors so teachers and students can research this strange new undersea world where plants and animals thrive on chemicals and volcanic heat instead of sunlight.

NVS students also spent a camping overnight at Westwind, where they learned about waves, tides, and currents as they observed the confluence of the Pacific Ocean and Salmon River first-hand. Thank you, Westwind Stewardship Group, for making this happen! NVS's science focus this year is on physical science, part of our three-year rotation that includes life and earth science, and our Science Coordinator Katie Miesle has been creating unique, hands-on science lessons that incorporate the physics and chemistry of the ocean.



Photo by: Neskowin Valley School

The ocean also figures into our social studies focus on world history this year. Our Explorers (K-1) are leaving their study of Australia behind so they can make an imaginative voyage to North America for the U.S. elections as part of their round-the-world tour this year. The Youngers (2-4) are using the Atlantic Ocean as the connection between the Old and New Worlds in a study of the history of world-wide exploration and trade. Our middle school students are looking at Asia this year, and thanks to a tip from Neskowin's Charlie Walker, the Japan-America Society will be coming to NVS to present their program "Japan on the Road" in November. Even our pre-schoolers, the Adventurers, will learn how their own family histories touch on cultures from around the world.

Neskowin Chamber Music is once again bringing a musician from the concert series to NVS as it does for several other schools—renowned pianist Joel Fan will certainly enrich our regular Monday Morning Music for our lucky students. Thank you, Neskowin Chamber Music!

NESKOWIN COASTAL HAZARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

By Mark Labhart

The Neskowin Coastal Hazards Committee (NCHC) is made up of representatives from the community, local, and state agencies and continues to meet monthly in Neskowin. The Land Use Subcommittee has moved their land-use recommendations to the Neskowin Citizen Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) who will eventually solicit community input into those recommendations. The community involvement will be similar to the process that was used in the development of the Neskowin Community Plan: community involvement will be considered before anything is finally recommended to the County Planning Commission. Stay tuned for information on how you can be involved. The Active Protection (AP) Committee has received the final report from the hired consultant on coastal erosion.

The AP committee will evaluate those recommendations from the consultant over the next few months and then report back to the community on possible options to address coastal erosion issues in Neskowin. Again, our goal is to insure the community is aware of the recommendations and be involved in helping to determine which one(s) are supported by the community with your input.

We value your input and ideas. If you have any input or questions, you can contact our Chair, Mark Labhart at 503-842-3403 or email him at: mlabhart@co.tillamook.or.us.

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2012 School
update

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TILLAMOOK PUD

By Doug Olson

Your Tillamook PUD electric bill increased an average of 6% October 1. And that's on top of a 5% increase in August of 2011.

So what's going on?

Perhaps a bit of history and detail will help understand the increases and cost structure of the utility business. While the increases are substantial, it should be remembered that TPUD went about 10 years without a general across the board increase prior to August 2011.

Rates were increased about 23% about 12 years ago following significant turmoil in the industry. You will recall the Enron debacle. Also, there were the Washington Public Power Supply (Whoops!) nuclear plants and their financial issues. After that shock (pun intended) to the industry, things leveled out for a number of years. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), the federal agency which supplies nearly all of TPUD's power from the Columbia River system, had modest increases. There were even some decreases in wholesale power. TPUD was able to establish a \$3.5 million rate stabilization fund to help smooth the ups and downs of the business.

Now, however, the industry is changing quickly again. The BPA system and its 31 dams are maxed out at certain times. There is a huge amount of wind generation on the system. The system itself has major components (Bonneville Dam, Grand Coulee Dam, etc.) approaching 60 to 70 years of age. The electric industry is very capital intensive. Significant investment will be required to maintain the multi-billion dollar system, which, of course, becomes part of the rate structure.

TPUD, like any business, must also control its costs to remain solvent. The cost of power from BPA represents nearly half of the costs of TPUD. The remainder includes salaries, wages, benefits, equipment and supplies, interest on debt, and capital expenditures. Your board is analyzing those costs carefully, including ever increasing health and retirement benefit costs.

The goal of your board is to keep the rates as low as possible while maintaining financial stability. We must consider bond ratings, the requirements of lenders, operating cash flow needs, and reserves for the storms we encounter on the Oregon Coast. It's a balancing act for sure.

A major storm like the December one few years ago can cost your PUD as much as \$500,000 just to restore the system. And it's usually not covered by insurance or State or Federal reimbursement.

It's also the intent of the board to try to hold necessary rate increases to a modest amount every two years or longer if possible. But there are lots of moving parts to the business.

BPA, which is the major driver of electricity cost in our region, is forecasting double digit increases every two years. While the public power industry pushes back hard, some increases are inevitable.

As mentioned, the hydro system is at its maximum during certain times of the year. That means that BPA must purchase power on the open market at significantly higher cost to meet its contractual and statutory obligations to public power like TPUD.

And then there's the cost of protecting fish runs on the Columbia system. Now, many of us here in Tillamook County love to fish. I grew up in Hood River on the Columbia and have been catching big silver fish since grade school. I haven't met many folks who want to destroy Oregon's famous fish runs. But there's a significant and increasing cost to the BPA system. About one third of the BPA wholesale cost of power is related to fish mitigation efforts, many mandated by Congress and the courts. That translates into about \$16 of your \$100 monthly electric bill.

Your board very much understands that an increase of \$20 per month to many folks in Tillamook County is a big deal. So we're looking hard at all costs, internal and external, to keep rates low while maintaining a financially sound utility.

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PUD news*

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CHIMNEY FIRE

By Fire Chief Weiland

We recently had another chimney fire at the Breakers resulting in some damage to the roof and the chimney chase.

Please be careful with the zero-clearance fireplaces and metal pipe chimneys as they are NOT made to be a major heat source but are designed more for aesthetics.

For more fireplace and chimney flue safety information, contact your local fire department:

Nestucca Fire & Rescue
503-392-3313 Office
503-812-1815 Cell
kweiland@nrfpd.com

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*Safety
first*

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Neskowin Community Association

PO Box 820
Neskowin, OR 97149

NCA Community Meetings
Sunday, May 26, 2013 4PM
Sunday, September 1, 2013 4PM

Web: www.neskowincommunity.org

Password: fish

Annual Membership Dues \$25 - May to May

NCA Board Officers & Members

Pam Rowland, President: pam@oregoncoast.com
Robin Crowell, President-Elect: robin.crowell@penwool.com
Kacey Joyce, Secretary: kaceyjoyce@comcast.net
Nancy McClain, Treasurer: mcclainn@gmail.com
Susan Amort: susanamort@msn.com
Bryan Arneson: BryanArneson@reachone.com
Randall Koch: ran@oregoncoast.com
Brian Lind: brian@nnw.us or brian.lind@iberdrolaren.com
Paul Plath: PNRAssoc@aol.com
Jeff Walton: jwalton814@msn.com

Special thanks to:

Christi Clark, Newsletter Editor
Cameron Nagel, Newsletter Copy Editor
Susan Linman, Newsletter Publisher
Ashley Keller, Newsletter Design
Jeff Linman, Webmaster

NCA 2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, May 25

Sign Painting at the Fire Hall: Noon-2PM
Trash to Treasures (Swap Meet & Dumpster): 8AM-3PM
Bake Sale: 8AM until sold out
Burn Pile: 8AM-3PM
NCA Membership Signup & Fireworks Donation
Opportunity: 8AM until Bake Sale sells out (2PM latest)

Sunday, May 26

NCA Community Meeting: 4-5PM

Thursday, July 4

Nesko Club Book & Bake Sale: 8AM-Noon
Parade: 10AM
Flag Raising & Sing-A-Long: Right after the parade
Castles & Kites on the Beach: 2-4PM
Fireworks (About 9PM)

Friday, July 5

Beach Clean Up: 9-11AM

August 9-11

Golf Scramble
Friday: Potluck Dinner & Raffle: 6PM
Saturday: Golf Scramble
Sunday: Golf Scramble, Catered Lunch, Awards, and Raffle (About 1PM)

Sunday, September 1

NCA Community Meeting: 4-5PM

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*Dates to
remember*

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*“Neskowin Rebels”
Photo by: Kacey Joyce*