



The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

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CITY OF COOS BAY

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IT'S BLACKBERRY ARTS FESTIVAL THIS SATURDAY! – It's finally arrived! Tomorrow carries on an annual Bay Area tradition: The Coos Bay Blackberry Arts Festival in downtown Coos Bay. The vent will be held tomorrow, Saturday, August 28th from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Enjoy arts, crafts, jewelry, photography, paintings, woodworking, entertainment, blackberry treats, food, and much more. The event is sponsored by the Coos Bay Downtown Association and organized by the Bay Area Jaycees. Don't miss it.

AND ON SUNDAY: THE ROTARY AIR FAIR! – This one is another "must" for pure family fun! This year's Air Fair promises the same kind of great events as the past two year's shows, plus a better display of military air craft. It's all happening at the North Bend Municipal Airport Sunday afternoon. You'll not want to miss this one either!

MAYOR VERGER ATTENDS NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES CONFERENCE – As President of the League of Oregon Cities, two weeks ago Mayor Joanne Verger attended the National League of Cities' Leadership Training, held this year at Welches, Oregon near Mt. Hood. It was her privilege to also welcome the Western Municipal Conference. The gathering of top elected officials included much discussion about the Internet and growing concerns about E-commerce and the effect that E*Bay (<http://www.ebay.com/>) and other Internet marketing WEB sites are having on municipal sales tax revenues and downtown property tax values. Oregon doesn't have a sales tax, of course, but concerns about commercial downtown business failures resulting from E-commerce competition are growing in some communities. This will be a hot topic at the National League of Cities annual conference later this year in Los Angeles, and if you've followed the debate about taxing the Internet you know this to be true. Much like the concerns associated with Wal-Mart coming to town a few years ago, local businesses will need to sharpen the marketing efforts and improve their own niche with local consumers. At least two downtown businesses are doing just that, using E-commerce to bolster their physical presence downtown by appealing to a broader market while keeping stores open for local shoppers. The debate is sure to continue.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT CINDI MILLER AND CHAMBER AMBASSADORS KEEP BUSY SCHEDULE – The Bay Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors have had a busy summer so far, starting by welcoming the HM Bark Endeavour on July 9, and continuing with seven grand openings (or re-openings), a Business After Hours at Ken Ware Chevrolet-Oldsmobile-Cadillac, and a picnic honoring three 20-year Ambassadors members: Clare Gove, Cindi Miller and Lou Ann Rode.

Red ribbons have been severed at: The dedication of the "Timm Slater Cyclists Rest Area" at the North Bend Info Center; the J C Penney Company VIP preview reception AND grand opening (two separate events); a Ken Ware Chevrolet-Oldsmobile-Cadillac remodeling celebration; The Medicine Shoppe's opening of a second location (formerly John's Pharmacy); Security Bank's grand opening; and the Coos Bay Public Library remodeling celebration and re-opening (great job there!).

But they're not done yet, and more events are on the horizon: August 27, 4:00 PM, grand opening at Oregon Tool & Supply, 705 S. Broadway, Coos Bay; and September 10, 4:00 PM, grand opening of My Yarn Shop, 264 S. Broadway, Coos Bay.

Then on September 24-26 several Ambassadors will travel to Astoria to attend the annual state Chamber Ambassadors/Greeters convention. Good job folks!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS PLANS SESSION ON “MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK” – The League of Women Voters of Coos County plans a September 11th meeting to participate in a project called "Making Democracy Work." The “politically neutral” meeting will be to hear from members of the community and not to promote any specific issues or agendas. The League invites the community to attend, learn and share in the deserts. Folks are encouraged to bring their own brown-bag lunch. The meeting will be held on Saturday, September 11, 1999, 11 AM to 1 PM and will have a panel of distinguished speakers, including: Jim Cunningham, Carol Gooden-Rice and Sylviane Hereford. The League will provide deserts and beverages. Contact Judith VanDuzer (267-6508) or Margie Marshall (756-5290) for further information.

CONGRATULATIONS SOUTH COAST HOSPICE – Mayor Joanne Verger and Councilor Judy Weeks joined other dignitaries and guests yesterday morning for the official groundbreaking of the new SCH Bereavement Center, which is being built on the 2.7 acre Hospice campus on Thompson Road. The new center will offer support, counselling and education about grief for the people of the Bay Area and surrounding communities. Mayor Verger, Coquille Mayor Mike Swindall, Myrtle Point Mayor Ranelle Morris and SCH executive director Linda Furman Grile shared the honor of breaking the ground and kicking off this great project, which is being financed by donations and private contributions, as well as SCH resources. Yes, city manager Bill Grile was also in attendance for the event, as was North Bend council President Rick Wetherell. Congratulations South Coast Hospice!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR “F” STREET RIBBON CUTTING – “You can see it from all over town,” was the comment one citizen beamed with satisfaction to us this week. Yes indeed. It’s true. The long-awaited “F” Street improvement project is finally complete and it’s time to celebrate! Mark your calendars for Wednesday, September 8th and meet Mayor Verger and city councilors at the bottom of the hill at “F” street for a grand opening and ribbon cutting. Watch for more details.

CITY MANAGERS MEET IN MYRTLE POINT – South Coast city managers are meeting in Myrtle Point this afternoon, the guests of Myrtle Point city manager Bud Schmidt. These gatherings occur quarterly in order to exchange ideas, discuss matters of mutual concern, and provide updates about current issues affecting our State and South Coast communities.

POLICE DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN RENEWS WEDDING VOWS – Police Department Chaplain, Pastor Richard Derby and Vickie, his wife of 25 years were the recipients of a surprise ceremony in which they renewed their wedding vows. The ceremony held at the First Baptist Church in North Bend was planned as a surprise by their three children. The ceremony was officiated by none other than Police Chief Chuck Knight.

POLICE OFFICERS ATTEND Y2K EXTREMIST TRAINING – Police Captain Jack Bushmaker and Detective Randy Sparks attended a workshop on Y2K and potential subversive actions by “extremist groups.” The training hosted by the Attorney General’s Office was presented as a forum for local agencies to share information and further prepare for potential problems associated with the “Y2K bug.”

SERGEANT KEVIN HEDGEPEETH ROTARY SPEAKER – Sergeant Hedgepeth was speaker last Tuesday at the Rotary Club in Florence, Oregon. Sergeant Hedgepeth has become known for his expertise in the area of Computerization and Y2K preparations. He also serves on the City of Coos Bay’s Y2K preparedness committee which is Co-chaired by Police Chief Chuck Knight, and Accounting Supervisor, Karla Garrett.

MINGUS PARK LAKE CLEANING - The Parks crew have been working diligently on removing the weeds that have taken over Mingus Lake this year. The crew is using rakes and a long pole to remove the weeds from the lake. A boat is being utilized to get out from the shore. The weeds are light once the water is drained from it and can easily be loaded onto a flat bed. Keep up the good work guys!!

ATTABOY, BRAD CARLSON -- Just after the publication deadline for last week's Friday Update, the Community Services Department received a phone call from a Coos Bay resident. Nothing so unusual about that, a lot of people call that department. This call, though, was a "pat on the back" for Streets Foreman Brad Carlson, who was described by the caller as, "one of the nicest and most professional people in government that I've ever had contact with." The caller went on and on about the great job Brad does -- it was a real pleasure to listen to that confirmation of things we've known for quite some time. WAY TO GO, BRAD!!!!!!

GIFT TO POOL PROJECT - The City of Coos Bay has received a cash donation to be applied toward the Mingus Park Bathhouse construction project. The donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, selected the project because of the park's immense value to the community as a meeting place for a wide spectrum of activities. This contribution is greatly appreciated and will be used to enhance the project. Many thanks from the City, School District No. 9, the Pool Management Assoc., and the community at large.

LABOR TRENDS In a statement to explain raising the minimum wage, Governor Paul Cellucci (R) said that everyone in Massachusetts should "share the economic bounty we enjoy today." The Massachusetts Gov. On August 11 signed into law a bill raising the state's minimum wage by \$1.50 per hour in two steps, to \$6.75, by 2001.

The current minimum rate (\$5.25) will be increased by 75 cents to \$6 per hour on Jan. 1, 2000. A second 75-cent increase, to \$6.75 will take effect Jan.1, 2001.

Only Oregon (\$6.50) and the District of Columbia (\$6.15) have a minimum wage over \$6, according to the Labor Department's Employment Standards Administration. In Washington state, minimum wage rates are scheduled to rise to \$6.50 next January.

LIBRARY TO CLOSE FRIDAY FOR STAFF TRAINING - Coos Bay Public Library joins others in Coos County for an all-day staff training session. All libraries will be closed on Friday, August 27, so staff members can convene at Southwestern Oregon Community College library for workshops on library genealogy resources, book selection, cataloging, investment resources and other topics. The library will be open Saturday at 1:00 p.m. for regular open hours.

LIBRARY CIRCULATION RECORD BROKEN ON OPENING DAY - On opening day last Friday, circulation of materials reached a record 1,964 items checked out, up from the previous record of just over 1,600 items. The figure over the 6 ½ hour open period represented 59.64% of all items checked out that day countywide. 1,257 people visited the library that day, well over 200 of them for the grand opening ceremony. Circulation for this week has ranged from 1,100 to 1,400 per day.