



# The Friday Update

Bringing you a summary of weekly news from City Hall

March 23, 2001

**CITY OF COOS BAY**

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**COOS HISTORICAL MUSEUM PLANNING CONTINUES** - The Coos County Historical Society is continuing its planning for the grand new museum to be constructed downtown at the site of the existing Chamber of Commerce Tourist Information Center. The new \$3.5 million facility will be a tremendous addition to our whole community, and a wonderful addition to downtown. In the meantime, take a "virtual tour" of the Historical Society's collection by visiting <http://www.marshfield.coos-bay.k12.or.us/student-works/Com/camandjesse/Default.htm>. This is a student WEB site completed a couple years ago by former Marshfield students Jesse Snyder and Cam Grile. The site includes a presentation about "The 104" -- the historic steam engine that is soon to be located on the property across from McDonalds on S. Bayshore. Visit <http://www.marshfield.coos-bay.k12.or.us/student-works/Com/camandjesse/train.html> and check it out.

**COOS BAY TO ONTARIO FREEWAY PROPOPOSAL** - Last night in the Council Chambers transportation advocate John Shank gave a presentation about his proposal for a freeway connecting Coos Bay and Ontario, Oregon. Questions and answers followed a brief film produced by the Oregon State Grange. With headlines in this morning's Eugene Register-Guard that rapid growth is fueling traffic fears in urban areas, Mr. Shank reasons that Oregon growth policy should be doing more to encourage development in rural areas that have not enjoyed the economic benefits of the Portland-Eugene / I-5 corridor. Hard to argue with this logic. The cost for the proposed freeway? Roughly \$700 million! Where to get this funding? Good question! Mr. Shank says this isn't the Grange's problem or his, and that political leadership needs to just figure it out. The meeting and Grange video are currently running on Channel 14, regional government television.

**WATER BOARD ALUM SLUDGE BILLING TO BE REVISITED** - Yesterday afternoon Mayor Joe Benetti, City Manager Bill Grile, Community Services Director Shanda Shribbs and OMI Project Manager Gary Young met at the Water Board with Board members Arnie Roblan and Dick Vigue, and Board General Manager Rob K. Shab and his staff to review the City's charges for handling disposal of the Board's alum sludge. The sludge is a by-product of the Board's disinfection process. Recently the City implemented a large increase for handling the material, which is dumped into the Coos Bay sanitary sewer system. Given that the Water Board is an entity owned by the cities of Coos Bay and North Bend, a rationale was developed to support a partial reduction in the fee increase recently implemented. "I support the partial reduction because it is reasonable if not altogether statistically justified" said City Manager Grile from his office this morning. "There is a basis to rationally support a fee reduction," he continued, "and Community Services Director Shanda Shribbs will be articulating this in a staff report that will be presented to the City Council next month."

**CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS AT THE LIBRARY** - "Peace Tales," presented by storyteller Yvonne Young, took place on Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m., in the library's Myrtlewood Room. It had a multicultural, nonviolence theme as part of Coos County's celebration of the Season For Nonviolence. This internationally recognized season extends for the 64 days between the anniversaries of the death of Mahatma Gandhi on January 30<sup>th</sup> and the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 4<sup>th</sup>. A special component of the

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library's program was a short visit by Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. The presentation included stories and crafts. The 45-minute program for children of all ages was free and sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Robin Michal Koontz, popular author and illustrator of a number of children's books, will present a program of her artwork and writing at the library on Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m. There will be a number of Koontz' books for sale at a discount and the free program will include a book signing. The Friends of the Library, program sponsors, will donate free autographed copies of books by Koontz to the library of any school which has seven or more students-teachers-librarians-staff in attendance. Although the program is aimed at children preschool through third grade, all are welcome.

**TECHNOLOGY CLASSES OFFERED** - Reference librarians Stephanie and Dianne have been presenting some excellent programs on library technology to various groups. Stephanie spoke to approximately 80 members of the Senior Computer Club on March 16<sup>th</sup> and may have brought in some new library users. Additional sessions are scheduled through the end of May.

**CHAUTAUQUA PROGRAMS** - The first program, "Raza Sin Fronteras: Mexican American Cultural History" by Jim Garcia took place March 10<sup>th</sup> to a diverse audience of 17. The next program will be April 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:0 pm when Twilo Scofield will present "Sealore: Seafarers, Sirens and Serpents," with legends, and superstitions, anecdotes and tall tales.

**MARCH ART EXHIBIT** - Both North Bend and Coos Bay libraries are featuring colorful quilts through the end of the month by members of the Coos Sand 'n Sea Quilters as part of the group's Quilts and Things for Giving Program. Through this year-long program, the guild donates quilts for people in need at various Bay Area institutions and agencies. The quilters created over 1,000 quilts and other items.

**SENIOR DAY** - The March program featuring the video "The Alaska Railroad" drew a record-breaking 85 attendees. April's program on the 10th of the month will feature a video on the Statue of Liberty.

**OLD McKAY'S TO BECOME LOCAL 290 TRAINING CENTER** - A permit was issued on 3/5/01 to convert the old McKay's market at 155 Kruse from a grocery store to a training center. Upon completion the building will contain five classrooms, and a shop area and be sprinklered throughout. The building will then be used to train plumbers and electricians.

**FIFTH STREET PLAZA** - The Fifth Street Plaza area planters in front City Hall will be getting a fresh look in the near future: the City is having some plants and trees installed. The current Fifth Street Plaza Project has been put on hold pending other Urban Renewal projects that are under way or will be in the near future. The plants will be low maintenance and can easily be moved to other locations within the City should other plans be made for the Plaza area.

**EMPIRE BOAT RAMP BOARDING FLOATS INSTALLED** - The Empire Boat Ramp boarding floats were re-installed this week. City Parks and Street crews reinstalled the floats and they are ready for full time use again. The City will remove the floats in the fall to prevent damage to the hinges during inclement weather conditions are the ramp.

**LADY WASHINGTON IS COMING TO TOWN** - The sailing vessel Lady Washington is coming to town and will arrive on or about April 16, 2001 and depart around April 22, 2001. She will moor again at the Coos Bay City Docks on the south side of the north dock and will be available for tours. The ship is 112 feet in length and is 22 feet wide with 4,442 square foot of sail area.

**SOUTH COAST WATER QUALITY** - The Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Land Conservation and Development joined together with South Slough National Estuarine educators in

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providing South Coast leaders with a Water Quality Model Code and Guidebook. This collaborative effort between various government agencies was to assist small cities and rural counties interested in reducing impacts on water quality from urban development activities. The ordinances contained in the document and presented at the March 14<sup>th</sup> workshop address urban pollutant sources which have been identified by the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Marine Fisheries Services as having the potential to degrade surface water, ground water, and aquatic habitat. This tool will be a useful resource in the development of an urban water quality management strategy consistent with other state planning policies, statutes and administrative rules. Coos Bay is targeted among other Oregon cities with populations in excess of 10,000 to complete such a plan in the year 2002. Attending city staff welcomed the partnering opportunity provided by this event for upcoming municipal water quality requirements.

**DOWNTOWN INVENTORY OF BUSINESSES IS BEGINNING!** - Community Services Director Shanda Shribbs is beginning an inventory of downtown building owners and tenants. The inventory will provide two basic pieces of information that will be used by the Oregon Downtown Development Association when its resource team comes to town...financed by the grant that has been submitted for funding. The survey will assemble this information:

- 1) What kind of tenants currently exist in downtown?
- 2) What empty space is available and what amenities are available for that space?

Contact information for building owners and tenants is a critical piece of information that will be accumulated. Mailing lists will be created to assure folks get information regarding public meetings that will be held. The area to be considered to begin with is Market to Curtis and the waterfront to 5<sup>th</sup> Street. It is expected the inventory will take 45-60 days. Please contact Shanda Shribbs at 269-8918 for more information.

**COMMUNITY SERVICES WELCOMES STUDENT INTERN** - Southwestern Oregon Community College student, Tracey McNew, will be working part time for the Community Services Department for three months. Tracey is available through an internship program at no cost to the city. She is interested in accounting and finance and will be helping Community Services with data base development, reconciling business license revenues with Finance Department reports, doing preliminary work on systems development charges and other related projects. Please join us in welcoming Tracey, her energy and enthusiasm will be great assets to the Department.

**CENTRAL AVE. STORM WATER OIL DISCHARGE** - An agreement is being finalized with the Department of Environmental Quality to continue to monitor the oil entering the bay through the Central Avenue storm water system, but not complete any other costly tests to locate the source of the oil at this time. The City will maintain absorbent pads in the three manholes on Central Ave., thereby catching most of the oil that might enter the system before it gets to the bay. Back-up absorbent booms will be available should any oil enter the bay after a storm. As soon as written approval for the plan has been received by the City, the boom currently placed in the bay will be removed. Cost of maintaining pads in the manholes will only be about \$10 per week.

**FRONT STREET WORK SESSION** - On Tuesday, the City Council held its first public hearing on the Front Street rezone proposal. For a portion of the area under review, the City is proposing to eliminate the requirement that uses be "water-dependent." In order to gain more understanding of the changes involved and the effects of those changes, the Council has scheduled a work for March 29<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. in the Manager's Conference Room at City Hall. The public is welcome to attend.

**COMING SOON - BUS SHELTERS** - The South Coast Business Employment Corporation (SCBEC) is moving forward with locating several bus shelters in the City. SCBEC manages "Coos County Area Transit"

for Coos County. Dial-a-Ride has been around since 1985, but the addition of regular bus routes has only been around for about 2 years. Ridership has grown to the point where bus shelters would be greatly appreciated by those using the bus. The shelters may also help the bus system grow. It is currently planned to place the bus shelters at the following locations:

1. The southwest corner of Cammann Street and Newmark Avenue (next to Chester Drawers)
2. SWOCC (near student housing)
3. Coos Bay Public Library
4. The northeast corner of Second and Central Avenues (by The Sconery)
5. 8<sup>th</sup> and Commercial (by the Mingus Park Tennis Courts)

**TOWN HALL MEETING - NEWMARK IMPROVEMENTS** - The City will hold a town hall meeting to discuss suggested improvements to Newmark Avenue between Staples and the Ocean Boulevard intersection. Consultant Larry Lewis, TriLand Design Group, Inc., and Howard Stein, CTS Engineers, Inc., will present alternatives for that section of the street. The meeting will be held at the Coos Bay Public Library on **April 5<sup>th</sup>** at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

**TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN** - The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has offered to do some preliminary work on the plan for the cities of Coos Bay and North Bend, with the intent of decreasing the amount of dollars needed from a "Transportation Growth Management Grant" to complete the entire project. Coos Bay has requested \$150,000 to complete the plan. By state law, every jurisdiction is required to complete a 20-year Transportation System Plan.

**COOS BAY POLICE RECEIVES RECOGNITION** - The Police Department received a certificate of appreciation from the Women's Crises Service of Coos County for the police department's outstanding efforts to end domestic violence. The award was accepted to Sergeant Robert Lounsbury and 9-1-1 Dispatcher, Tammy Lounsbury at the Women's Crises Service awards banquet last weekend.

**POLICE FAMILY ACADEMY SCHEDULED** - The Police Department has scheduled a "Family Academy" for adult family members of Coos Bay Police Officers. The academy will provide family members the opportunity to gain insight and understanding of the situations faced by police officers. Family members electing to participate will meet one evening for eight weeks, and will be exposed to all aspects of the Coos Bay Police Department and policing.

**SOUTHWESTERN / COOS BAY POLICE INTERN PARTNERSHIP A SUCCESS** - Southwestern Oregon Community College Students, Amber Robinson and Josh Scarberry recently completed thirty hour internships at the police department. Amber will be leaving the area to attend a four year college in Wyoming, while Josh will be continuing his education at Southwestern, and hopes to return for another internship at the Police Department. Josh assisted the police in monitoring activity in the area of Marshfield High School in response to neighborhood complaints.

**POLICE AUCTION SCHEDULED** - The Coos Bay Police Reserve Officers will be taking care of this year's "police auction." The auction has been set for Saturday, April 21, 2001. Additional details including time and location will be announced, and posted on the City of Coos Bay web page as soon as information is available.

**FIREFIGHTERS HOLD ANNUAL BANQUET** - The Coos Bay Volunteer Firefighters Association held their annual awards banquet this past Saturday evening. Awards were given out to members as follows: Volunteer Firefighter of the Year, Jeff Common; Career Firefighter of the Year, Mike Seldon; Volunteer Officer of the Year, Steve Schneiderman; Career Officer of the Year, Ed Jackson; EMT of the Year, Mike Hurley; Rookie of The Year, Wally St. Julian. Years of Service Awards were given to the following members:

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5 Years, Ed Buford, Russ Thackery and Brett Weidemiller; 10 Years, Roger Johnson and Nick Kelsey; 25 Years, Jon Eck and 30 Years Ed Jackson. Congratulations everyone!