

Neighborhood Meetings

Caspar residents are moving forward with the Sustainable Caspar process that began in February to identify the challenges and paths around achieving our Caspar vision. Emergency preparedness, water availability, food security and other concerns will be on the agenda. Over the next two weeks, a series of Caspar gatherings will offer an opportunity for neighbors to find attainable solutions that can be carried out within a year.

This is an opportunity to give everyone an equal voice in finding actions that make Caspar more robust, resilient, and adaptable while also looking for activities that are enjoyable and inspiring. They are also a time to get together with neighbors, to meet some new people, and to talk about what's going on in your neighborhood in an environment that welcomes all ideas.

By the time you read this, the first of these meetings will have taken place at Eric and Deb Freeman's house in the Upper Fern Creek neighborhood. Please understand that these meetings are for Caspar Residents *only*.

Three more meetings are scheduled:

Tuesday, July 8, 5pm: Downtown Caspar neighbors are invited to meet at Meredith and Bob Frey's home.

Wednesday, July 9, 4 pm: West Caspar neighbors are invited to Mike and Ruth Dell'Ara's home.

Saturday, July 12, 3 pm: Johnson Park and Lower Fern Creek neighbors are invited to gather at Marty Johnson's home.

Invitations have been hand delivered to many homes in each neighborhood, but if you live in one of these neighborhoods but did not receive an invitation or cannot attend your neighborhood meeting, please call 964-1323 or email

gather@CasparCommons.org

These neighborhood-wide gatherings will bring people together in small groups to talk about very local and Caspar-wide concerns -- an opportunity to give all Caspar residents an equal voice in finding actions that make Caspar more robust, resilient, and adaptable while also looking for activities that are enjoyable and inspiring. They are also a chance to get together with neighbors, to meet some new people, and to talk about what's going on in your neighborhood in an environment that welcomes all ideas.

The next step in this ongoing, multi-year project, is a Caspar-wide potluck meeting at the Caspar Community Center on Sunday, July 13 at 1 pm.

Our nation desperately needs examples of places that integrate different opinions successfully. Caspar is the place to do it.

On Volunteering

"Volunteers are the heart of Caspar Community. Simple as that." *So says Dalen Anderson, the Community Center's manager. Anyone who's attended events in Caspar sees "the usual suspects" cooking, serving, and cleaning up after. Who are they, and why do they do it?*

Jim K, who is rumored to have been a *mâitre d'* in a past life, leads the serving team. Here are some of his thoughts:

So, why do I volunteer?

I just flat out love serving!

According to the Gospel of Bob Dylan:

*They may call you doctor
or they may call you chief,
but you're gonna have to serve somebody,
yes, you're gonna have to serve somebody.*

There not a single situation that I've seen or could ever imagine, where a doctor would not serve their patient with the best of the best care, no matter who that patient was, or what the situation was.

Care is care, there's only one class of care, and it's the same for everyone. (Health care is a right, not a privilege Medicare for all!)

Serving food is very similar to doctoring. There are some choices involved, some questioning and advising, and then delivering that request with the goal of making the customer happy, satisfied and desirous of returning.

I mean, why not? What could possibly be an alternative to that scenario?

In fact, if physicians in training were required to wait tables for a few months, they'd turn out to be better doctors as well as better business people. They would gain a better understanding the important healing role of serving someone. They'd also learn that if they wanted to grow a rewarding practice, all patients need to leave with "good tastes in their mouths."

Be it doctoring, waiting tables, relationships, it is always about a different way of doctoring, a different

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COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Download it here:

CasparCommons.org

Volunteering: the heart of Caspar

Jim K continues...

way of waiting on a table, and a different way of relating. It's not about always being a positive person, or maintaining positive emotions. It's about generating feelings of warmth, of friendliness and of caring toward yourself and others. It like the meditation practice of lovingkindness. It's about love.

As you take the customer's order for eggs over easy, and you catch that split second smile at each other, it's all about that moment of love. And that moment of love is good for everyone. In fact, it's a predictor of better immune function, cardiovascular health, and much more, including better personal and social skills.

I have one other reason I love volunteering.

As those of us who have found various ways to live here already understand, Caspar is one of the greatest places on the planet to live a happy life.

And man do they put out some delicious food from that beautiful kitchen, or what!?!

Asked for a bio, Jim submits this:

One can flourish in Caspar.

It's the key word for establishing whether you are living the life you hope to live: flourishing ...not happy, not famous, not rich, but living in such a manner that you are proportionate to your surroundings. That's where I'm trying to get my bio to be.



Miriam Davis writes,

I find volunteering at Caspar Community Center a lot of fun, and get to feel useful at the same time. This is how I have become acquainted and at home in the community. Working with other people in the kitchen, or serving at Pub Night, or helping on a work day is so completely more rewarding than just sitting and talking. You get to know people so much quicker, and become a real part of a community. It's as much fun as working on the class float in high school. Kurt Vonnegut says somewhere

Human beings will be happier - not when they cure cancer or get to Mars or eliminate racial prejudice or flush Lake Erie but when they find ways to inhabit primitive communities again.

That's my utopia.

Mine, too.

Bette G can usually be found in the kitchen, while husband **Bob Z** is likely to be manning the bar. Bette writes,

Who Am I : I live in East Caspar with my husband Bob and spend my days growing our food, fishing, collecting wild food, volunteering in Caspar, the Food Bank and other places, walking the beaches and forests, reading, and camping.

Part of every year Bob and I spend in a small town in Mexico, fishing, diving and participating in the Mexican community. The town holds monthly general meetings, has an elected body, a town square, a pavilion for fiestas and a meeting hall.

Why I Volunteer: I feel privileged to live in Caspar where we have a Community Center and true community. I volunteer as much as my time and energy allows.

Working in the kitchen is my regular gig but I also participate in other projects. I work to end herbicide use, create a safe crossing on Hwy 1, stop illegal logging, clean Hwy 1, disaster preparedness, maintain the free library at the CCC, preserve our access to JDSF and remove gorse.

My volunteer work is a joy and I thank everyone in Caspar for making it possible.



Bob writes,

After owning and operating a commercial salmon troller for more than 20 years and escaping near death after being

run over by a 600 foot container ship south of San Francisco, I decided that volunteering in my community was a saner, safer and more useful way to go. Volunteering is excellent medicine for the soul, spirit, and greater community at large. Rather than spend your days as most Americans do in over consuming, come down and volunteer. It's good for you, the community and the planet in general. ★



photo: James Katzel

Pub Night Chef Challenge

If you are a chef and would like to be featured as our "guest chef" or would like to help serving, working in the kitchen or doing dishes, call or email Dalen at 964-4997 or caspar@mcn.org.

LAND AND WATER IN CASPAR: The Big Questions

By Jim Tarbell

Land and water are the natural resources that hold human communities together. Since the end of the last century, when Caspar residents came together to build a thriving, nourishing community, land and water have been at the heart of the discussion. At that point, 300 acres of the old Caspar Lumber Company lands were for sale, and there was recognized history that the Caspar water system had easily provided for the needs of a larger Caspar after the mill closed. Since then, over half of the land has been turned over to public ownership. Meanwhile, Caspar water has supplied for much of the thirsty needs of the Northern Mendocino Coast.

Now people are looking at the next steps around the role of land and water in building a healthy community. For the last several years there has been a strong discussion around a Caspar effort to buy the remaining 132 acres of the old Caspar Lumber Company land. Several inspiring possibilities for buying the land bubbled up at the Sustainable Caspar Conference in February. But the energy around those approaches seems to have subsided. Instead, change is coming to Caspar from independent sources. A couple of old Caspar Lumber Company parcels have been purchased by private buyers friendly to the spirit of Caspar. These include the old company store at the end of Caspar Road and the three-acre parcel right across the street from that. Rumors abound that other Caspar-friendly folks are contemplating privately buying other parcels. At the same time, more Caspar land has come on the market including the old What's Afoot Gallery in downtown Caspar, where an

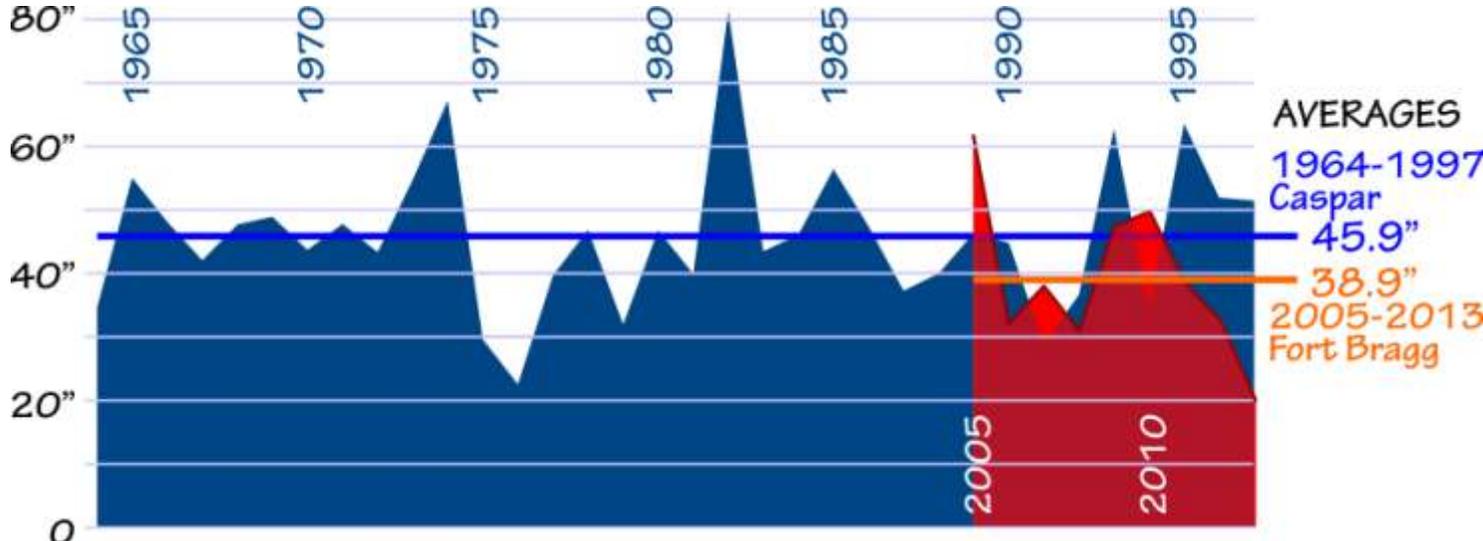
enthusiastic local group is considering creating a center for the printed arts. There is also 130 acres of east Caspar forest lands at the beginning of the Caspar Logging Road up for sale. Most excitingly, Fortunate Farm has come to the old Tregoning Ranch, just south of the Jug Handle Farmhouse. Fortunate Farm is a joint project of Gowan Batist, who has been the Noyo Food Forest Garden manager, her parents and family, along with North Coast Brewing Company that will use the farm produce in its Taproom and Grill. Along with a recent grant submitted by Caspar Community to USDA, this could shepherd a dynamic local-food movement into Caspar. More ideas for acquiring the available Caspar land may also grow out of the neighborhood and community meetings planned for the next several weeks.

WATER

A 1992 water study assumed that a potential 350 gallons per minute could be pumped out of the East Caspar aquifer, "regardless of the month." If that could be sustained for 24 hours a day, that is enough water to provide the daily needs of 5000 people. Our world of diminishing potable water and increasing climate change makes this seemingly abundant supply of water a central feature to our future lives in Caspar. Right now, the old Caspar Lumber Company water system accesses that east Caspar aquifer with two sets of wells. One well services the five old Caspar Lumber Company rental houses and the four parcels that have been purchased from the successor to the Caspar Lumber Company, the Caspar Cattle Company. That well sits on Caspar Orchard Road, a little southeast of

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Comparison on Rainfall Years 1964-1997 (Caspar) and 2005-2013 (Fort Bragg)



Most recent (Fort Bragg) data is shown in red overlaid on older Caspar data (in blue). Note comparative averages at right: The eight most recent years are seven inches less than the older series.

LAND & WATER: *The Big Questions* concludes the intersection with Fern Creek Road. The other well is further west, just before the highway, and was used for years by the Mendocino Water Company to supply water to homes and businesses from Westport to Elk.

For almost two decades, Caspar residents have discussed the possibility of taking over the operation of the Caspar water system for the beneficial use of Caspar residents. Most of the private homes in Caspar, however, get their water from wells on their property. As long as their wells hold out, they will probably be happy to use their wells. But the drought puts the productivity of those wells in question. A well that used to produce 6 gallons a minute on our property went dry last September. According to the local paper, Caspar only received 19.94 inches of rain last year. That is the least annual rainfall I could find in the historical record. It is 11 percent below the 1976 record for the worst drought in memory. In that drought the worst year was in the middle of the three-year drought. This drought has gone on for three years and the rainfall has been decreasing an average of 20% a year, which means the drought is getting worse and may last at least several more years.

This information, the onset of climate change, and local anecdotal stories about people running out of water have heightened the urgency of creating a Caspar-wide water system. Most discussions have centered around two aspects of this undertaking. First people wonder what sort of entity should own and administer the water. Secondly a decision has to be made between acquiring and fixing up the existing system and starting all over again with any of a number of innovative approaches.

The day of the private water company is long past, mainly due to the cost of maintaining private systems. Most water companies are now in some sort of public ownership. The choice is between having a community services district or a county water district that is operated by the community or having a mutual water company owned and operated by the users of the system. There are many plusses and minuses to all of these options, more than can be thoroughly covered here.

The next decision over rebuilding the existing system comes down to a question of money. It has

been estimated that upgrading and replacing the old system will cost \$600,000. By extending the system down Caspar Road, it could deliver water to a maximum of 47 customers. To be viable most of those households or businesses would have to become customers of the water company. It may also require extending the system to other interested users and the ability to get government grants or loans to make the system thrive. Another choice would be to tap into the east Caspar aquifer in a different location with either a new or existing well and then put in brand new piping or simply deliver the water to storage tanks located on a customer's property.

No matter how all of these issues around land and water play out, it is important that the community stay involved and make sure that the final outcome is in the best interest in all of the people of Caspar. ★

A map of properties for sale is on page 6

Tzutujil Mayan Painting Exhibit

Annie Lee presents an exhibit of paintings by internationally-known Tzutujil Mayan artists Antonio Vásquez Yojcom and Juana Mendoza Cholotio at the Good Life Café & Bakery in Mendocino during the month of July.

Antonio, Juana, and their four children live in San Juan La Laguna, a small town on the shore of Guatemala's Lake Atitlan. On the patio next to the small gallery at their home, they paint unique variations of their original designs.

Several paintings depict mandala-like market or harvest scenes using the *ojo de pájaro* or bird's eye view, some employ the *ojo de hormiga* or ant's eye view, and others, both abstract and realistic, depict traditional themes. All the deliciously colorful paintings are oil on canvas mounted on Luan mahogany. Although copies can now be seen in some markets, the paintings on exhibit are originals.

More paintings and selected Guatemalan textiles will be at What's Afoot Gallery in downtown Caspar for two weekends: July 11-13 and 18-20 from 10 to 5, with Friday, July 11 opening at 2.

Proceeds from sales will directly benefit the artists.

For more information, please contact Annie Lee at 964-0321 or annielee@hotmail.com



**Marty Johnson's
Canning Workshop
Sundays, July 20th
& August 17th**



photo: Sienna M Potts



Long time Caspar resident, Lila McMurtry has relocated to Reno to be with her son and his family. Lila contributed to the newsletter. Her articles on birds and wild life will be missed by all. I could always go to Lila and get answers about chicken pens and eggs, jewelry, plants, gardening, birds, etc. Lila is a jill of all trades and her kind spirit is missed by all of us. One of the last things she did before she left Caspar was to feed the horses on Caspar Road.

- Beverly Sternkopf

This edition of
Caspar Community News
was laid out by Michael Potts

The next edition will appear in September. Submissions of activities, events, or information of interest to Casparados is invited. Send them to

lists@casparcommons.org