

Caspar Community News

November 2014



photo: Sienna M Potts

UPCOMING EVENTS

A complete schedule can be found at our website.

Tuesday, November 4th
VOTING IN CASPAR

Fridays, November 7 & 21 9:30am
Caspar Community Board
All Welcome

Friday, November 14, 6:30 - 9 pm
Caspar Pub Night
Celebrity Guest Chef
Kim Badenhop
Sauerbraten, Braised Cabbage
Pumpkin Soup

Sunday, November 16th
Salmon Chanted Evening
Annual Harvest Dinner
& Silent Auction

Sunday, November 23, 9 - 11 am
Caspar 4th Sunday Breakfast

"Salmon-chanted Evening"

The annual Caspar Community Harvest Dinner and Silent Auction is coming up on us in a few short weeks, Sunday, November 16. I am calling it "Salmon Chanted Evening" because of the beautiful local caught salmon, donated by a generous community member. Debra Dawson of Good Thyme Catering will be lightly smoking the fish, which will then be served with an herb butter sauce. Dalen and crew will be preparing the rest of the meal. The vegetarian option is autumn vegetable tart. Both meals will begin with cauliflower, pear and fennel soup, and a salad of arugula. Roasted beets, savory panna cotta with hazelnut gremolata will be served with potatoes dauphinoise, braised kale and bread. For dessert there will be a magnificent selection of desserts. Before and after dinner enjoy live music by Lynn Kieswetter and friends. There will be the usual dazzling array of silent auction items to bid on, including overnight stays at two hot springs, gift certificates from many local merchants, books, art and more.

Tickets are \$40 and reservations are a must, as half the seats are already filled. Call the Community Center today at 964-4997 or [email caspar@mcn.org](mailto:caspar@mcn.org). Please tell whether you want the salmon or vegetarian entree.

Last minute items for the silent auction and offers to help out are very welcome and are being coordinated by Judy Tarbell, who may be reached at 964-1323 or tarbell@mcn.org

also in this issue...

Community Center Gets Solar
Caspar Crossing

Take the Pledge
2 More Ways to Help
New Years Eve

From the Board: Take the Pledge

We all know the concept- we support causes and public radio by signing up for regular monthly donations via our credit cards. "Its simple," they say, and "you will hardly notice it" they say "less than a cup of coffee a day."

What's true is that it works very well. You make an affordable monthly donation and Caspar Community has a steady monthly income we can budget on. We have been blessed with several donors able to give funds sufficient for capital improvements such as our new solar electric system. However we still need a steady cash flow to pay our bills, our mortgage, insurance and the wages of our wonderful staff who keep the center open and running smoothly. As a community center we would prefer to make our facilities available to our community at the lowest possible cost. To be able to make our operating budget we face a basic choice; rent to weddings and other events for non-community members for higher rates, or rent to local classes and groups for local based events at lower rates. The more we depend on the higher end rentals to pay our bills the less the center is available for low or no cost community events.

The more pledgers we have the less dependent we are on outside rentals and the more we can make the center available for classes and all those special events that make our community the wonderful place it is. The more pledgers we have the less time we need spend on raising money and the more time we have to do the organizing and community building that make Caspar a special place.

Its simple, you will hardly notice it. But Caspar Community will notice and thank you.

—*Paul Reiber*
Caspar Community Board president

New Years Eve at the Caspar Community Center

The Swing Doctors have been chosen to play at this year's New Years Eve Party at the CCC. Along with great appetizers and a beer, wine and champagne bar it is bound to be a fun way to celebrate. Tickets will be available at the door for \$20. Mark your calendars, and look for more news about the New Years Eve Party online and in your inbox.

—*Dalen*
Caspar Community Center manager

News From the Center Two More Ways to Help Caspar Community

Besides being a great community of volunteers, pledgers, and donors, there are now two new ways in which you can help out the Caspar Community.

We have just started with a program called Planet Green recycling. Bring used inkjet cartridges, cell phones, and small electronics and place them in the box found in the hall of the community center. When it is full, I send the items off the Planet Green and they mail me a check.

AmazonSmile is a simple way to support the Caspar Community in the form of a 5% donation made by Amazon on any AmazonSmile purchase. To activate the donation, go to smile.amazon.com and select Caspar Community as the charitable organization to receive donations, then shop. The prices and selection are the same as regular Amazon purchases. Items from which we benefit are marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on the products' detail pages. You may use your existing Amazon account if you have one.

Community Center Gets Solar

The Caspar Community Center solar project is up and running. This project was completed thanks to the work and generous financial contributions of our community. After many meetings a design criteria consensus established:

That the CCC would use solar energy to lower our carbon footprint.

That the system would lower our dependence and costs for power delivery from PG&E.

That the system would be able to operate independently from the PG&E grid in the event of a short or long term outage.

That the system would operate automatically with no need for manual intervention.

So, here's what was done:

The North side shed was rebuilt on a solid concrete foundation and divided into two rooms. One room houses the inverters, charge controllers, control system and back-up generator. The other room hosts a 48 cell enclosed battery bank and still provides room for the garbage cans.

24 photovoltaic panels were installed on the South facing aspects of the North Hall roof. The internal structure of the roof was augmented by 16 cross-braces to support the weight of the PV panels. These roof mounted solar panels are a solid black and blend into the roofline for a pleasing aesthetic view.

The electrical service entrance was upgraded to 200 amps and an automatic transfer switch was installed.

continues →



photo: Sienna M Potts

One good thing I can say for these darkening days

Center Gets Solar *concludes*

Here's how it works. During the day we can generate up to 6.5 kilowatts per hour of electrical power. The excess power is sold back to PG&E. During the evening we purchase power from PG&E at the lower evening rates.

When the PG&E grid goes down the power load of the Center is automatically transferred to the battery bank/inverters. When and if the batteries fall below a threshold voltage the propane 8.5K kW generator starts automatically recharging the batteries and providing uninterrupted power to the Center.

When PG&E power is restored the system will wait 2 minutes to insure the grid is stable and will switch back to PG&E power, and also shut down the generator if active.

There are several other failsafes built into the system to insure continuous operation.

Many thanks to Mendocino Solar Systems, North Coast Refrigeration and Electric, John Wozniak and his crew Jason and Sam, and the many community folks who have guided the project to completion.

— Bob Frey

From the Community Garden

Some highlights of the summer garden were Lee's towering Giant sunflowers, the numerous brilliant purple Angelia volunteers, and the giant borage humming with bees from the neighbors hives. Our crew of five harvested an abundance of food this year and the kitchen received some goodies too. The bright orange pumpkins give us good cheer as things die back and we celebrate these blessed rains. The garden is plump with winter greens and the last of the lettuce. Next up - Planting fava beans!

— Sakina Bush

is that I never miss sunrise or sunset. Knowing the light is probably amazing outside makes it easier to pull myself out of my comfy bed when the clock says it's time before the sun does. It helps that I just got back from a month in the desert, where the light puts on an extra special show morning & evening. Returning home, I've tried to pay more attention to those light shows here. Pink, pink & pinker clouds glow around the rising sun, then over the ocean, then all around the horizon. Just like the desert, it's impossible to photograph yet impossible to resist.

The long dark nights are just a gift that's harder to appreciate than a long sunny day. I spend a lot of time outside, but camping for a month is living outside, seeing the natural wonder of each place all day & quite a bit of the night. I knew the stars rotate around the North Star but out camping I could really watch them spin. Believe me, I'm adoring my comfy bed (with sheets!) & my indoor plumbing but I'm also making an effort to step outside & appreciate the light show more. One of the best things about traveling is coming home & seeing it anew. The starry desert skies are legendary but ours is almost as strong (& hey, if it's raining? great!).

— Sienna M Potts

Sienna's Desert Slideshow may be found here

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

The next edition will appear in early 2015. Submissions of activities, events, or information of interest to Casparados is invited. Send them to lists@casparcommons.org

Caspar Crossing

Work has been ongoing between Caspar and Caltrans to figure ways to connect east and west Caspar and create a safer crossing for both pedestrians and vehicles.

Recently speaking with David Morgan, Chief, District 1 Traffic Safety, I was given the up to date plan. In July 2015 the funding will be available for this project. Some time after that (hopefully that same summer) work will begin.

The project will include:

1. Flashing beacons on the large Hwy 1 "Pedestrian Crossing" signs erected several years ago.
2. Installing intersection lighting at the crossing.
3. Additional roadway delineation.

According to Caltrans "This project should increase driver awareness of the intersection at all times of day and night, as well as provide clear guidance for drivers to maintain their lane through the intersection. The additional pavement markings should also provide pedestrians with clear guidance as to the edge of traveled way."

Several changes the community requested such as lower speed limits on Highway 1 and a pedestrian activated flashing crosswalk will not be available at this time due to Caltrans regulations, analysis and review.

We are all looking forward to a safer intersection.

— *Bette Goldfarb*