

**City of Brookings
Parks and Recreation Commission
2008 Annual Report**

February 22, 2009

To Mayor Anderson, City Councilors, City Staff, and citizens of Brookings:

It has been my great privilege to serve as Chair of the Brookings Parks and Recreation Commission for the past year. The following is a report of the developments that transpired during my tenure as Chair.

Azalea Park

After months of construction, the Capella by the Sea held a dedication ceremony in December 2008. With construction substantially complete, the City was given the keys to the Capella along with the task of maintaining and managing the facility.

The Oregon Department of Forestry returned with the news that more trees were to be removed from Azalea Park in an effort to prevent the spread of Sudden Oak Death. Seven mature Oregon Myrtles were cut down and a 300' radius around each stump was cleared of plant material that could potentially host SOD. Some large trees that remained after SOD tree removal consequently posed a hazard to power lines and had to be removed as well.

Bankus Fountain

Bankus Fountain is slated for landscaping improvements in the spring of 2009. Old overgrown shrubs will be removed, turf area reduced, and new plants installed in an effort to create a more beautiful and sustainable landscape. This effort was bolstered by an offer to the City of three dozen azaleas by Encore™ Azaleas at no cost to the City. In addition, a donation of \$250.00 was made by the Brookings-Harbor Lions Club to help with materials costs. Installation of new plant material will be completed by both City Public Works employees and volunteers from the community.

Bud Cross Park

This park continues to offer multiple recreational activities for the citizens of Brookings. I have no news to report other than regular ongoing vandalism that plagues most City parks in Brookings and causes an inordinate amount of repair and maintenance, as well as frustration, for the Public Works department.

Chetco Point Park

City crews removed brush to widen the trailhead and removed poison oak from the upper trail, making hiking in the park a much more pleasant experience. The parking lot was re-graded and new gravel added.

Commissioner Parrish organized a horseshoe tournament in October. Several commissioners showed up to volunteer at the event. Unfortunately, there were not enough participants to compete and the tournament was cancelled.

City Pool

Pool Supervisor, Jeanne Nelson, retired in 2008 after 30 years of service in that position. Steve Gates was hired as the new Pool Supervisor.

In 2008 the pool was given a nearly \$8000 electrical service upgrade as well as new paint on the floors of the changing areas. In 2009 the pool floor drains will be retrofitted to comply with new federal standards, and the broken main pump will be replaced by one that will allow for reduced energy usage.

Easy Manor Park

In 2007 a subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Commission was formed for the purpose of writing a grant to fund the refurbishment of this long-neglected park. In July of 2008 the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department announced that the City of Brookings would receive a grant in the amount of \$83,000 for new playground equipment, picnic tables, barbeque grills, benches and other improvements at Easy Manor Park. The subcommittee is currently analyzing three bids from playground design firms and anticipates making a selection and placing an order by the end of February. The new equipment will be installed by both City Public Works employees and volunteers from the community in the spring of 2009.

KASPER

The Kids After School Program of Education and Recreation was organized and implemented by a dedicated group of volunteers from the community. The program's inaugural year in 2008 was an enormous success with participation exceeding expectations. KASPER is planning to expand into a year-round after school program in 2009.

Stout Park

Stout Park saw some major changes in 2008 including the removal of several large trees that were posing a hazard to power lines. There was vocal opposition in the community to the removal of mature trees; however, under the circumstances, the Commission determined that the best interest of the public would be served by their removal. Coos Curry Electric supplied and planted several more appropriate specimens to replace those that were lost.

Stout Park also saw the addition of the Stout Mountain Railway on a formerly overgrown and neglected part of the park. A group of dedicated train enthusiasts, headed by Commissioner Tony Parrish, spent countless hours clearing the site, installing tracks, planting pint-sized specimens, constructing buildings and seeking donations from local businesses and organizations to make Stout Mountain Railway a special feature of this under-utilized park. The dedication ceremony took place during Azalea Festival 2008. Since that time, Commissioner Parrish has organized several special events to promote the project and provide opportunities to run the train for the public's enjoyment.

In 2007 a subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Commission was formed to develop a plan for the beautification of the area known as Lower Stout Park. This is a little group with a big vision whose mission is to create a garden that not only incorporates art, but is a work of art in its own right. Committee member and artist Pete Chasar submitted a design that includes a major water feature as the central focus of the garden, and the committee has adopted it as the plan they will present to the public. The committee is currently examining the subject of fundraising and how best to organize it.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow commissioners for their service in 2008. I feel truly fortunate to have had such a wonderful and collegial group of individuals to work with over the past year. Each and every one of them gives substantial time and effort to enhance the beauty and livability of Brookings through their extensive volunteer efforts. Brookings is unquestionably a better place to live because of them. I would also like to recognize the many individuals at the City who have provided me assistance as well as those who work so hard to maintain our parks. In particular, Gary Milliman, John Cowan, Lauri Ziemer, Joyce Heffington, LauraLee Gray, Diane Morris, council liaison Dave Kitchen, Dave Lentz, and Patti Dunn were always willing to give support and guidance on the numerous occasions that I required it. I look forward to serving another four-year term on the commission.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Benoit
Chair