

CITY OF YACHATS VISITORS CENTER 2014 QUARTERLY REPORTS

Submitted by Beverly Wilson, Contract Director

JULY-SEPT

CONTACTS	JULY-SEPT '12	JULY-SEPT '13	JULY-SEPT '14
Visitors Logged at VC	8,159 +16.4	8,693 +6.5	9,188 +5.6%
Yachats Visitor Packet distributed via outdoor box at VC, Fairs, local Festivals, Groups, (approximate #)	950	1,275	1,550
Phone calls logged at VC	1,154	1,179	1,162
Info requests from individuals & Travel Interest Leads from OCVA, travel exhibits and advertising	3,153	2,244	2,116
Total # of Q Contacts with visitors/prospective visitors	13,416 +11.4%	13,391	14,016 +4.7%
The above counts do not include thousands of additional visitor and potential visitor contacts made via web site visits.			

The Visitor Center office maintained its high-season hours, open to the public 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily, and often later on Saturdays, totaling 555 hours this quarter. Approximately 36% of the shifts, about 200 hours, were covered by volunteers. Vicki Martin, administrative assistant, covered 243 front desk hours. I covered the remaining 112 hours as well as handling all the center's email correspondence. The Visitors Center had a steady stream of guests during the summer months and rarely a quiet moment. Anyone working the front desk was continually engaged in answering questions of wide variety, suggesting itineraries and providing maps and other literature.

Administrative Assistant Projects

In addition to staffing the front desk, Vicki has

- built a database of the email addresses provided on our guest register by people who've expressed interest in receiving a quarterly Visitors Center newsletter. This new database makes it possible for us to launch a quarterly e-newsletter this winter that will be targeted to 'subscribers' who will also have the option of forwarding it to others.
- updated our reference sheets for contact information, hours and fees of central coast attractions
- begun assisting in set up a PR tracking system based on a model provided at the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism last April.

Most of the above tasks have been accomplished during hours away from the Visitors Center due to the continual guest traffic through the center this quarter.

Vicki's staffing of the Visitors Center has made it possible for me to focus on committee projects and to complete projects initiated under the South Lincoln County Rural Tourism Studio.

Committee Work and Meetings I attended this Quarter:

- *Yachats Coordinated Marketing Team:* Participated in our monthly meetings and began coordinating 3 projects that will help provide content to our social media efforts; one will help promote our local shops, as well:
 - (1) Yachats Sea Stars Monthly Raffle Drawing: Created a draft display flyer and raffle card that are now being designed; found and ordered the art glass sea stars, which are being delivered this week. We'll launch this project the week after Mushroom Fest. The raffle will have two winners each month who will be announced on Facebook by first name, city, state, and the business (with photo) where they deposited their raffle ticket. The drawing will be held at City Hall. Other promotional uses for the sea stars are under consideration, as well, and will later be announced.
 - (2) Began drafting questions for our new "Did You Know..." series that will be run on Twitter and Facebook. The questions are derived from content from our We Speak training program.
 - (3) Began research on Facebook Photo Contests. Our team is meeting with Barbara in early November to launch this photo contests series which will have changing themes quarterly.
- *SLC Tourism Committee:* Chaired the committee's September meeting covering the continuing progress and near completion of our projects from Rural Tourism Studio and possible future projects for which to seek grant funding.
 - (1) On Sept 30, chaired a special meeting that included regular committee members as well as additional directors from the Yachats and Waldport chamber boards about prioritizing future projects for which we may seek grant funding.
 - (2) Did preliminary searches for a variety of tourism grant opportunities and shared the list found.
 - (3) Researched cost and requested price quotes for future projects under consideration, including (1) a Hike-Bike-Paddle Rack Card that would direct people to the digital version of the map; and (2) map apps / other travel apps.
 - (4) Attended a presentation on digital brochures that include video along with two other committee members.

SLC Rural Tourism Studio Projects

- *Hike-Bike-Paddle Trails Map*
 - (1) Picked up printed maps in Springfield
 - (2) Created a map distribution list. Packaged and distributed the map to over 50 locations. This includes all the coastal welcome centers and visitor centers for maximum coverage of the Oregon coast region, as well as major visitor centers in the

Willamette Valley, our feeder markets. Lauralee Svendsgaard also distributed the map at the Portland Trails Fair. Since the initial distribution I've filled 6 re-orders of the map.

- (3) Completed the second through final drafts of two separate grant reports to funders of the South Lincoln County Trails Map.
- (4) Researched options for offline map viewing.
- (5) With committee chair, David Locke met with a web designer to develop a digital version of the trails map and sent files.

I also provided Hike-Bike-Paddle project summary information to Jan Brown for her article in the Yachats city newsletter.

- *We Speak Yachats-Waldport-Seal Rock:*

- (1) Completed the quiz questions for most of the second half of this 12-subject training series, as well as most of the facts sheets, and began formatting them for print.
- (2) Scheduled the final training session in this series, which will be on coastal birding led by Dawn Harris at the end of October; this was the first opening in her schedule.

The We Speak training packets will be compiled in November and thereafter will be ready for check-out. To date, three other visitor centers have requested information about our We Speak program, as they consider developing one for their communities.

- *Gravel Epic Bike Race:*

- (1) Met with our local race volunteers coordinator Ken Aebi. Designed and broadcast a digital recruitment flyer for him. (He followed up on this broadcast via phone, email and personal visits.)
- (2) Corresponded with Gravel Epic coordinators about information needed to assist in the local recruitment of volunteers.
- (3) Worked with Yachats River Valley Farm Tour organizer Catherine Lucido to coordinate the tour with the race weekend and include a note regarding cyclists in the tour flyer. Helped post these flyers throughout town and on the central coast. The aim was to encourage cyclists and their families and friends to stay overnight and attend the Sunday Farm Tour.
- (4) Created 200 "Welcome Gravel Epic" packets with the Farm Tour flyer on the front cover of the packets. Inside was a list of Farm to Table specials offered at local restaurants, as well as other promotional material. These were distributed at registration to bike race participants and to event volunteers from out of town.

In the end, the Farm Tour was very well attended and we received a letter of thanks from the coordinator for our assistance in promoting it. However, it was not attended by the cyclists on Sunday, whose interests were fairly exclusively on the race.

Literature Orders

- Placed orders for 27 publications from local businesses and attractions, from Travel Oregon, Oregon State Parks, OCVA, COCA, and other regional travel offices.

Literature Updates

- Created an insert for the Yachats Walking Guide to include 4 businesses that opened after our printing. During low season the walking guide will be updated and printed again along with updates for the lodging list and Yachats gem brochure.
- The Visitors Center's new business cards include a photo of Yachats on the back (the view from the Cape) and a QR code.
- Our town went through more than 6000 copies of the Yachats/Waldport illustrated map this summer, and we will soon be reordering. In addition to reducing printing costs, having Waldport on the reverse side has been very helpful in directing people to the port, campgrounds, Eckman Lake, the interpretive center, and even to the pharmacy.

Visitor Center Maintenance

- The outdoor literature boxes were removed, re-glued, and re-hung by two volunteers, James King and Dwayne Martin.

Visitor Center Notes

We received a wonderful thank you note from a fourth-grader named Aiden from the Washington DC area, including a photo of himself standing next to his school project on Oregon. He'd written asking for information months earlier, and volunteer Gerald Stanley sent it to him. Gerald asked him why we were the first town in Oregon he chose. Aiden answered, "groovy name!"