Port Costa Conservation Society
July 2024
PCCS Newsletter

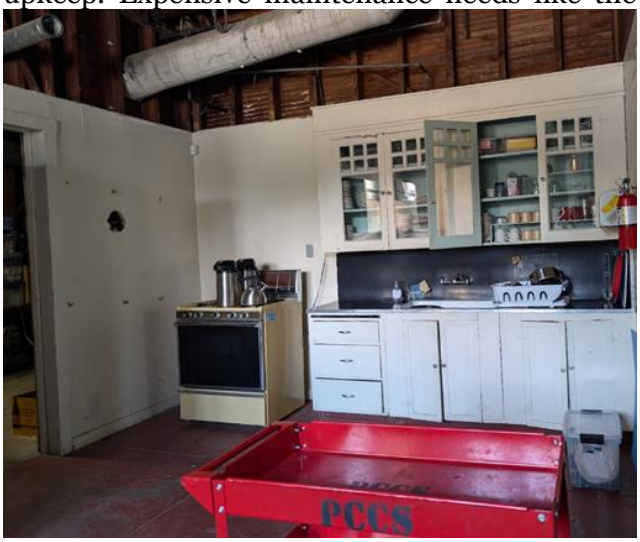
Jeff Wilson
Chairman's Message

By now most of you have read the article in the Chronicle about the town and the Semester Program. I know this because if my dentist and numerous friends from the past have contacted me about it I assume that most of you reading this message have seen it as well. I will not use this space to comment on the contents of the article but I want to point out what the article didn't explore; that is the school building itself needs a lot of work.

We have patched and maintained the structure but made very little headway on much needed improvements. We have done this with a lot of volunteer hours, small donations from members, and reliance on small grants from the Crockett Community Foundation and the East Bay Regional Park District to keep it viable. We don't really fit into the large grant landscape because of demographics and qualifications for big money.

The building itself doesn't care about politics and emotions, and it needs more than just status quo new roof that was put on years ago now needs to be repaired, the playground landscaping and paving has degraded in time and the ability to just keep pace with natural deterioration keeps increasing in time and dollars. The school has gone through many generations and provided education and a place for the extended community to meet and celebrate. Back in the 1980s the town chose to save this great old building as a treasured Port Costa asset, and made PCCS responsible for it. It's this Board's goal to make sure the school building and grounds has a future as a real resource not just as an edifice defined by the past.

upkeep. Expensive maintenance needs like the



To better serve our community, the School's kitchen is in need of significant improvements.

Thanks to All our Volunteers…

Each month we report School volunteer hours at the PCCS Board Meeting.

Michael Domagalski recently did a calculation and (excluding COVID years) we averaged about 100 volunteer hours a month. Not all volunteer efforts get recorded so the actual hours are certainly higher.

Volunteers contribute in big and small ways – like help at work parties, fundraising events, mow and maintain the Schoolyard, open and shut the School gate, tend to the Community Garden, Museum/Archives, shop for supplies, fix things, install things, clean things… **Our School stays open through this kind of generous volunteer commitment.**

To all who give their time to this important part of Port Costa, we thank you!

Using the School - Our town's only public building

We were recently asked by a neighbor "How can I get to use the School?" We thought we'd answer that question here.

As always, please join the regular activities that happen on a weekly/monthly basis.
– PCCS meeting are every 3rd Monday of the month @ 7:00 pm.
– Port Costa Sanitary Meeting happen every 2nd Wednesday of each month @ 6:00 pm
– Ballet dance classes every Monday from 10:30 am to 12 Noon
– Yoga classes every Monday from 5 to 6 pm
– BINGO the second Tuesday of the month with doors opening at 5:30 pm.
-- The Schoolyard is open all day for young and old to enjoy.

The above activities are open to the public and sponsored by Port Costa Conservation Society.

For Port Costa residents and members of Port Costa Conservation Society, you can reserve the School for a donation (note that the cost to the general public is $2,000 a day). We do have a limited number of days each year available for large events so depending on the nature and size of the event, some advance planning and discussion would be needed. It is mandatory to get an insurance waiver which can be obtained from your home owner's insurance often for a minimal fee.

For other non-residents uses (weddings, memorials, smaller group gatherings), the school can be rented for a Board approved event with an insurance waiver.

For any commercial use of the school, the event proposal will have to be presented at a board meeting and the agreement discussed. Again, this will require an insurance policy and rental agreement.

Jeff Wilson is the to-go-to person for requests. Send inquiries to PCCS.PortCosta@gmail.com

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Our COMMUNITY GARDEN is Thriving

The Community Garden is yielding a bounty of vegetables while providing a relaxing place to "farm" and be with neighbors. The Grant from the Crockett Community Foundation has funded the installation of our new deer-proof fence and irrigation system. All 22 boxes are full at this time, but if you are interested in the wait-list, email: PortCostaCommunityGarden@gmail.com

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Port Costa Museum & Archives Project Update

There is much happening at the Museum these days. A couple days a week, Archivist Jenny Fosket is spearheading the effort to complete the organization of our significant collection of historical documents and creating the "Finding Aids" for retrieval. With that, we have just been accepted as a "Contributing Institution" to the Online Archives of California. Our collection is being formatted to be uploaded to this massive collection of archives from Museums, Libraries and private collections from across the state. Our archives will be searchable by researchers and the curious. This is a free service to the museum.

The Museum also has received some notable donations in the past months:

- Wendy Addison donated a perfectly preserved 1917 Souvenir from France that included a miniature bag of Port Costa Flour. Port Costa was well known in Europe as their source of wheat…a little like we know the Bordeaux District in France for grapes/wine.

- Heather Holmes continues to find treasures at their home to deliver to the Museum.

- The G.W. McNear family visited the Museum and presented us with a photo of Fred William McNear (G.W. McNear's brother) and a 1970's booklet on the history of Port Costa.

- Robin Bailey Liebes and the Betty & Clayton Bailey estate have donated their collection of Port Costa related letters, articles, Clayton's Station 77 Firefighting gear and several of Betty and Clayton's creations. We will be planning a Bailey Museum Exhibit for 2025.

If you discover Port Costa related documents, photographs or artifacts that you would be interested in donating or loaning to the Museum - OR - if you would like to volunteer (no experience necessary), please contact Suzanne at PortCostaMuseum@gmail.com

Do you recognize this Robot? Beginning in 1976, members of the Bailey family would step into this life sized Robot suit and wander around town promoting "Dr. Gladstone's Wonders of the World Museum" on the 2nd floor of the Warehouse. Now at our Museum!

Crockett Community Foundation Grants - Improving the School

The Port Costa School has benefitted from Grants awarded by the Crockett Community Foundation. They have provided matching funds for the proceeds from the Town Wide Yard Sale, and with a larger Grant, we now have rechargeable electric yard equipment, pull-down blinds for windows, carpet for the Community Room, Baby Changing Stations, PA Speakers and Mic, a swamp cooler and new Basketball Backboards. Thanks go to the CCF and to the volunteers who work to install improvements, care for the grounds, and keep the School open!

Jason Hardy, Billy Martini, Tom List (left to right) - with an assist from Scotty Hawkins installed our new basketball backboards. These were purchased with a CCF Grant.

Sarah Louise Humann & Grace Dare host BINGO in the School Auditorium as fundraisers for local non-profit organizations. Doors open at 5:30 pm on the 2nd Tuesday of the month.
Come on down for this fun family evening and bring some moola for a good cause!

The 2024 Port Costa 4th of July Community Potluck/BBQ - such a great town tradition. This year our Station 77 Volunteer Firefighters set up a cool pool on the School ball field complete with water gusher guns for kids young and old to beat the heat!

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