



City of North Bonneville February Newsletter



A Message from the Mayor's Desk

Welcome to our February newsletter. After an alternately freezing, warm, wet and overall weird January, I am ready for our weather to get back to normal, although I'm not really sure what that is anymore.

As I mentioned last month, we would like to bring back our Block Leader program. In addition to providing a sound method for keeping in touch with each other and notifying residents of emergencies, this program can provide another way for our residents to provide feedback on how they feel our city is doing.

In addition to, or as part of, the Block Leader program, we would also like to begin a formal Neighborhood Watch program. The Skamania County Sheriff's Office has told us they will be happy to help with an informational meeting regarding Neighborhood Watch to assist us in establishing this program.

The National Neighborhood Watch Program was officially started in 1972 and is a proven way to lower crime rates and make neighborhoods safer. The main focus is teaching us how to help ourselves by observing and reporting suspicious activities to our local law enforcement agencies.

Another benefit of Neighborhood Watch is the strong sense of community it fosters. Our city already has a more cohesive, supportive atmosphere than many other communities, but this program will provide another opportunity to get to know your neighbors even better by working together to make our city a safer place to live and raise our families. This cooperative partnership can extend beyond the crime prevention aspect to include other community projects such as improving our city playground, picking up litter in our parks or maybe even building that skateboard park we keep hearing about.

If you would like more information you can attend upcoming City Council meetings or contact us at City Hall. Our number is 427-8182 or you can always contact me via email at don@northbonnville.net.

Your council is considering a move to holding council meetings only once per month.

While this would save staff time and money in preparing for and publicizing the meetings, we also wish to make sure you have adequate opportunity to bring issues before them. Please notify us if you have concerns about this proposed change.

February Meetings at City Hall

1st & 15th - Planning Commission 6:00pm

8th & 22nd - City Council 7:00pm

These are open public meetings. Agendas are posted on the window at city hall, sent via email, and posted online at www.northbonnville.net.



Administrator's Note – Utility Rates

As you are aware, we increased the city's water rates effective January 1st. The first bills under the new rates have been put in the mail and are due February 20th. Please contact us if you have any questions about your bill.

With water rates in place, we are also increasing our sewer rates. The final hearing and decision should be this Tuesday, February 8th. The rate structure we are proposing is similar to the water new rate: \$20 base fee plus a charge of \$3.37 per 100 cubic feet of waste water discharge. Unlike water, however, we don't directly meter sewer discharges. To estimate your sewer discharge, we will therefore use your average water consumption during the "cold weather" months of November through March (this also moderates spikes some people incur over the holidays). We will then apply this average to the new monthly rate and use it for the year, revising each March. I expect the average residential bill to be about \$40 per month.

All of us understand that we are in tough economic times that make these increases difficult, however our last increase was in 2001 and we cannot support the system with our old rates. Increased state regulations, an aging infrastructure, and inflation have all combined to raise our costs. We are keeping the rates as low as possible by excluding some future costs of the system from calculations, but we must implement these new rates in order to continue operating our water and sewer systems.

~ John Spencer

"The third Monday in February is designated in the United States as Washington's Birthday, more commonly known as President's Day. There was an attempt in 1968 to officially name it Presidents Day, however, this suggestion died in committee. Still, Washington State celebrates Abraham Lincoln's birthday concurrently with Washington's birthday, calling it 'President's Day,'

**City Hall will be closed:
Monday, February 21st
in observance of President's Day**



100 cubic feet = 748 gal

75% of water used indoors is in the bathroom, and 25% of this is for the toilet. The average toilet uses 4 gallons per flush (gpf). You can invest in a ULF (ultra-low flush) toilet which will use 2 gpf. But you can also install a simple tank bank, costing about \$2, which will save .8 gpf. This saves 40% of what you would save with the ULF toilet.

By using water-saving features you can reduce your in-home water use by 35%. This means the average household, which uses 130,000 gallons per year, could save 44,000 gallons of water per year. On a daily basis, the average household, using 350 gallons per day, could save 125 gallons of water per day. The average individual, currently using 70 gallons per day, could save 25 gallons of water per day.

Action	Gallons
Flushing the toilet	1 to 5 gal
Running the faucet	1 to 5 gal
Taking a shower	2 to 10 gal
Filling the bathtub half full	20 to 50 gal
Running the dishwasher	At least 15gal
Running the washing machine	Up to 50gal
A leaky faucet	Up to 2,700 gal/year

DID YOU KNOW?

"We are toying with adding a new "Did You Know" section to this newsletter.

Did you know about the Cascades Trail along the river? Starting at the Fort Cascades Kiosk by the power lines, it makes a 1.5 mile loop along the river to the juvenile fish monitoring station and back. Along the way there are historical markers of the original town site. Our favorite spot is a boulder engraved with replicas of petroglyphs typically found in our area."



LIBRARY NEWS

Fort Vancouver Regional Library is developing a "Lucky Day" collection, and North Bonneville branch is a test site. We've started with recent bestsellers, and will be adding new titles each week. Stop in and see if it's your "Lucky Day" -- you may find a new title by your favorite author.

Family storytime will be held Thursday, February 10 at 2 p.m. All ages are welcome for stories, songs and more.

School-age children who need something to do during Wednesday "early release" time can check out Stevenson Library's Wacky Wednesdays programs from 1:30 to 3:30. Each week we feature a different craft project. February is heart month: enjoy making dough jewelry, cards and more!

If you can't make it into the library during our afternoon hours, your items on hold can be picked up from the shelves in the City Hall lobby 8-5 weekdays. Just locate your books, put the white slips in the box, and we'll take care of the rest. For more information or assistance, call the North Bonneville Library at 427-4439 Tuesday through Thursday, 1-5 p.m., or contact Stevenson Library, 427-5471, Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Thursday through Saturday, 9 to 5 p.m.

Chris Hughey,
Librarian

Bookmobile Schedule

Sat, February 5 & 19

Celilo	9:00-9:30
Windsong Estates	9:45-10:15
Hamilton	10:45-11:20



A bicycle was turned into city hall at the end of January. If you have lost your bicycle, please call city hall to claim.

UTILITY BILLING is now on a monthly basis and is due by the 20th of each month. A \$10 late fee will be assessed on the 21st. As always, if you have any questions or need to make payment arrangements, please call city hall @ 427-8182.



SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Do you need help, need to report suspicious activity or just have a question for the police? The non-emergency phone number for the Skamania County Sheriff's Office is **427-9490**. In case of an emergency call 911.

Please call the sheriff's office if you witness a speeding vehicle, suspicious activity or just have a question.



PLANNING COMMISSION

The commission is currently working on the Children's Loop trail. You are encouraged to attend the commission meetings and see what this and other projects are all about.



PARKS AND RECREATION

The Parks & Recreation Committee presented their recommendations to the city council on January 25th. The committee outlined a list of short-term projects and recommended four projects to begin this year; a community garden, upgrading the boat launch area on Greenleaf Lake, naming the city park, and rezoning Lot 300 across from the ball fields and the School Lot to Park zones. The city council will consider these and other recommended projects at future meetings.

Please contact Jennifer @ 427-8182 or jennifer@northbonneville.net with any news, events, or suggestions for the monthly newsletter.

