**WILDERNESS**

Robbin Schindele

The Wilderness Committee has been busy since the last newsletter. Our ongoing effort to get business support for the Crater Lake Wilderness Proposal continues to grow. We currently have 74 businesses and are nearing our goal of 100 businesses before our next Annual Banquet. Our federal legislators have told us that support from local business owners is very important if we want them to introduce our Wilderness Proposal in Congress. If any of you know a business owner you think would endorse our Wilderness Proposal, please call or email me and I’ll contact them.

Our Alice DiMicille fundraising concert in August went well. We had a good and enthusiastic crowd at Oran Mor Meadery and raised over $1200.

Big news came in September when the Portland Patagonia employees approved our grant request for $10,000. The money will be used to support our 2018-2019 communications plan designed to expand our reach and influence in support of the Wilderness proposal.

There are four elements in the plan. The first is to reach out to civic and business organizations in the gateway communities of Crater Lake National Park with a presentation on the financial benefits wilderness areas bring to communities and individuals. Second is the creation of a YouTube video channel featuring videos of people enjoying and talking to us about what being in the park and surrounding wildlands does to enrich their lives. Third is a daylong symposium on the current state and the future of water in Southern Oregon. And lastly a wilderness focused bi-weekly radio show on our own KQUA, 99.7 FM. While the Patagonia grant was a huge blessing, the committee continues to search for and submit grant requests to support our efforts.

We continued our Wilderness Hike Program into October with hikes to Bull Dog Rock, Tipsoo Peak and the Rogue River Gorge. The general public is always invited on these hikes and committee members lead them. Besides the good exercise and beautiful country it’s another opportunity to gain grassroots support for our proposal.

The Wilderness Committee is committed to Wilderness but also to our community. We held a Thanksgiving food drive in November on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving where committee members donated 777 pounds of food to UCAN for distribution to the hungry in Douglas County. A special thanks to Fred Meyer and Sherm’s Thunderbird for allowing us to solicit donations at their stores and to Oran Mor, While Away Books and the Umpqua Unitarian Universalist Congregation for have donation barrels in their places of business.

We’re going to end the year with a fun, community based event. On December 13 from 6:00 to 9:00 PM committee members will be caroling in downtown Roseburg at restaurants and on the street corners. We have a lot of singers and musicians in our group and we are looking forward to bringing a little holiday cheer to our fellow Roseburg residents. Watch the UW Facebook page for a list of participating establishments or just drive by and give us a honk.

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

