



THE

Highlander

Jan./Feb. 2021

The Rural Bonny Doon Association Newsletter

RBDA Virtual Public Meeting **Rebuilding after the Fires** Joe Christy

Founding President of the Bonny Doon Fire Safe Council

Wednesday, February 10, 7:30 p.m.

Zoom Video Conference Meeting

In 2010, Joe Christy, a former chairman of the RBDA, was lucky enough to join a truly extraordinary group of Bonny Doon residents in forming the Bonny Doon Fire Safe Council, whose mission is to “educate and mobilize people of Bonny Doon to protect our community, homes and environment from wildfire.” He was the founding president of the Fire Safe Council of Santa Cruz County and currently serves as that Council’s treasurer. The Bonny Doon Fire Safe Council (BDFSC) works to secure State and Federal grants to carry out landscape level vegetation management projects. The council provides advice to groups on preparing their neighborhood for wildfires and mitigating the risk of wildfire to the community. Supported by the generous donations of our Bonny Doon Community they work with residents on home hardening and defensible space, most notably with an annual chipping program.

Please join us in a discussion with Christy about hardening our homes, fire-safe buildings, and the recent activities of the Fire Safe Council.

Participating in the Virtual Public Meeting

Zoom (zoom.us) is a video conferencing platform that is free to use through either a web browser or application, and audio participation is possible through a dial-up connection on your phone. We selected this platform based on its widespread use and ease of accessibility. For this meeting, we will be utilizing all the available security features, including password-protection and waiting rooms managed by the host.

Access and participation in this meeting:

- Send your e-mail address to meetings@rbd.a.us to receive the meeting credentials and password. Your email will not be used for any other communication and will not be shared.

- Call into the meeting between 7:10 and 7:20, so that we can begin at 7:30.

- Be ready to participate in the election of Board Members if you are a member in good standing, with a raise of your “zoom” hand.



Despite Fire, San Vicente Redwoods Trails Plan Moving Ahead

The CZU Lightning Complex Fires tore through the 8,160 acres of San Vicente Redwoods (SVR) preserve, from its ocean facing slopes to its Bonny Doon forests, skipping about in the seemingly random mosaic pattern we’ve observed in the fires that have devastated many parts of Santa Cruz County in recent years.

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, which is managing public access to SVR, expects to finish its post-fire assessment in mid-January, according to Projects Director Cory Caletti. “The big picture? Our trail alignment design is still solid,” she says, although “some tweaks” may be necessary because of the fires.

The two big fire-related problems the Land Trust will have to deal with are hazard trees,

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The Zone Captain Model for Recovery and Communication

At the last RBDA public meeting, Charles Brooks from the Rebuild Paradise Foundation and Jennifer Gray Thompson from Rebuild North Bay Foundation shared their experiences surviving and rebuilding after the Camp Fire in Paradise and the Tubbs and Kincade Fires in Sonoma. One system of recovery organization that Brooks and Thompson endorsed was that of Zone Captains.

The Paradise Zone Captain System is described by Rebuild Paradise this way: “The Camp Fire Zone Project is designed by citizens to help citizens. In their roles as zone captains, individuals meet regularly to share rebuilding questions, resources and needs specific to their community. Zone Captains then report back to their community/council leaders with updates of information or requests.”

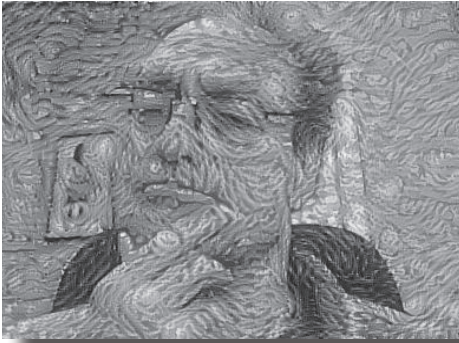
Many of us in Bonny Doon already have unofficial and official zone captains. Unofficially, most of us are lucky enough to have neighbors we turn to for information, neighbors whom we depended on during the fire, neighbors who know whom to ask about what. Officially, in Bonny Doon, we also have the Bonny Doon Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). This group of trained volunteers prepares for emergencies and has begun organizing a system of Communication Officers — a grass-roots volunteer system that could double as a Zone Captain system.

Is the Zone Captain/ Communications Officers model appropriate for us in Bonny Doon? There are two needs in the community that such a model could serve: fire recovery and stop-gap emergency communication.

Supervisor Ryan Coonerty’s office is supportive of this grass roots organization (zone captains or communication officers) as a way to expedite fire recovery. Rachel Dann from Coonerty’s office wrote, “I think a zone captain approach would work well for those who have lost homes...I think that is how it worked in Sonoma. We want

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Board Members up for Election in February



Andy Davidson

Board Chair

I have been a Board member for the last 7 years. I am a long-time resident of Bonny Doon and my wife grew up on Branciforte Drive in Santa Cruz - an area that used to be very similar to today's Bonny Doon. One main reason we moved here was Bonny Doon's rural nature and excellent school. I have been very active in several youth organizations, in particular the Boy Scouts, as Cub Master, Summer Camp Director, and Parent Committee member for 12 years. I coached soccer and was active in Little League. I recently left a position as Data Scientist and Software Architect in Apple's Applied Machine Learning Department to focus on other research interests. I am an avid surfer and mountain biker.

Some change is inevitable. Bonny Doon is a diverse community. It's important to listen to all voices to ensure that the Bonny Doon of the future is one we choose, while not losing what makes this place special.



Lisa Ortiz

Vice Chair

Lisa Allen Ortiz was born and raised in rural Mendocino County and has been a resident of the Santa Cruz Mountains for 24 years. She's a writer and also serves as a counselor for Save the Redwoods League. She and her husband of 26 years are proud parents of two grown daughters. She loves Bonny Doon and is grateful for the opportunity to serve the RBDA in its effort to keep our home natural and rural.



Martin Burmeister

Corresponding Secretary

I was born and raised in the Central Valley and have spent my whole adult life living in various parts of California. I have always enjoyed the outdoors, whether it is gardening in my yard, hiking the coastal range, cycling along the Pacific coast or climbing in the Pinnacles. I had always wanted to move away to a more peaceful, rural setting, away from the congestion of the Silicon Valley where I work as an engineering project manager. Five years ago, we finally found what we were looking for here in Bonny Doon. I love the serenity of living within these redwood forests, minutes from the Pacific coast below us. It is this combination of unique people and this beautiful setting that makes Bonny Doon a very special place. If re-elected to the RBDA board, I would be excited to continue applying my skills towards preserving Bonny Doon's natural character, helping it rebuild after the devastating summer fires, and helping solve the many other issues facing this community.

Call to Action: UCSC Issues EIR for 2021 Growth Plan

On January 7 UC Santa Cruz published its long-awaited Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), detailing how its 2021-2040 Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) will affect everything in surrounding communities from housing to traffic to the natural environment.

By California law, the public has 60 days to comment on the report, until March 8 at 5 p.m. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the University to consider each comment and respond to it in the final EIR. While CEQA doesn't require that UCSC mitigate any negative impacts, it does require that the University try. If UCSC determines that any impact can't be mitigated, it can fall back on a statement that the benefits, e.g., a college education for California students, "override" the problems caused.

Since the lengthy document was published close to press time for this *Highlander*, we haven't had a chance to analyze in detail what it will mean for Bonny Doon, Santa Cruz and other local communities. It will certainly bring an increase in population, housing prices and traffic, and urbanization of a portion of the campus that is now meadows and forests, like the part of the 2,000-acre campus that extends into Bonny Doon.

UCSC will hold public sessions to take comments on the DEIR on Wednesday, February 3 and Thursday, February 4, from 5 to 7 p.m. Due to the pandemic, these will be virtual.

The LRDP and DEIR are available at lrpd.ucsc.edu/2021/eir.html.

Comments on the DEIR may be sent by email to eircomment@ucsc.edu, or by snail mail to Erika Carpenter, Senior Environmental Planner, Physical Planning, Development, and Operations, University of California, Santa Cruz, 1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95064. It is best to include a contact number and return address and keep a copy of your comments. It would also help to send a copy to the City-County Task Force on UCSC Growth at info@actonucscgrowth.org.

Trail Plan in SVR

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says Caletti, and any debris flow caused by big rains, which as of this writing have not occurred. Land Trust Forester Nadia Hamey and Sherwood Design Engineers have been assessing the affected trees and will be deciding which ones need to be removed for the safety of trail users and Land Trust staff. The root balls of removed trees will be left intact to ward off erosion, Caletti said, and tree removal is expected to be completed by the end of 2021. The schedule may be affected by any changes wrought by the season's rains.

Trail construction will get underway concurrent with removing the hazard trees. Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz (MBOSC) is designing and building the trails, which will be done in three phases over a period of years. Caletti said MBOSC and members of the Land Trust's own design team have experience building trails in areas that have been burned, and know what adjustments have to be made.

The first trails will roughly parallel Empire Grade and be accessed by a gated parking lot. Plans are still to expand the trail network southward toward the coast in Phase 2, and Phase 3 will connect the SVR trail network to Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument, near Cal Poly Swanton Pacific Ranch.

Interestingly, the Land Trust will not permit electric bikes on its trails, unlike Cotoni-Coast Dairies. Deed restrictions at Cotoni-Coast Dairies prohibit "motorized vehicles" except for staff use for management and maintenance, but the Bureau of Land Management has decided that the motors that power so-called Class 1 e-bikes, which cut out at 20 mph, aren't really motors, and will be allowed on the bike trails planned there.

Zone Captains

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to prioritize organization and assistance for those going through the recovery and rebuilding process. If [such a program starts in Bonny Doon] I may be able to be helpful with GIS support and logistics.”

In addition to helping in recovery from the CZU Lightning Fire, could the Zone Captain model help in the event of another emergency? A few weeks before the fire, the RBDA hosted a public meeting with communications infrastructure companies and policy makers. The theoretical emergency anticipated at that meeting soon became a real-life catastrophe. When the power goes out in Bonny Doon, we are all in the dark, without official or unofficial news or directions. What can we do to communicate with all our neighbors during the next emergency, and could neighborhood organization help? The Bonny Doon CERT team has been organizing around this urgent question.

Dawn Mackey at the Bonny Doon CERT branch has re-instituted monthly meetings to train and organize CERT members. Mackey explains CERT's vision: “I would like to develop ... people in the neighborhood who would be willing to purchase and maintain radio communication equipment and willing to relay situational information and local needs in a disaster. I am imagining some driveway flag or other method of letting the neighbors know they can go there for help.”

Mackey clarifies that you do not have to be a trained CERT member to be a Communications Officer. Trained CERT officers complete twenty-two hours of emergency preparedness training and are on hand to help first responders, but a Communications Officer needs only equipment and a willing heart. In Bonny Doon, our lack of communication infrastructure intensifies any emergency.

CERT is promoting the use of MURS radios for use by Communications Officers—these are cheaper (around \$60) than ham radios and do not require a license. If you are interested in becoming a Communications Officer or in learning more, Mackey is graciously taking your emails and organizing this effort. She hosts monthly Zoom meetings. If you are interested in organizing or serving as an Emergency Communications Officer, please contact Mackey for more information: dawnmackey411@gmail.com.

Call to Action: *Communication Infrastructure Working Group is Being Assembled.* Looking beyond the necessity for immediate emergency systems, the RBDA has formed a working group to understand and lobby for long-term communications infrastructure in Bonny Doon. If you would like to help with this working group, or if you have a perspective on the issue of communications infrastructure in Bonny Doon that you think needs to be heard, please reach out to Eric Ornas (eornas@gmail.com) who is graciously chairing this group. Additionally, if you have insights or resources to add to this discussion, please contact the RBDA board. We have made it a priority to support communication infrastructure as we recover from the fire and prepare for future emergencies.

The state and federal officials are aware of the catastrophic effects of our communication black-outs in Bonny Doon, but until private and public resources are marshalled for our mountain, we are dependent on our wits, in-home technology and self-organization. If we organize ourselves into Recovery Zones to communicate with the state and county as we rebuild from the fire, we might use those same organization methods to mitigate the harm of future emergencies.

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RBDA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Yearly dues are \$20/pp or \$15/pp for multiple members at same address.

Memberships expire on Jan. 31 of the next year. *

Number of Members _____ Number of years you are joining or renewing for _____

Multiply years times number of memberships. Checks only, please, made out to RBDA.

Amount enclosed for dues: \$ _____

I also wish to support the RBDA with an additional contribution of \$ _____

Total amount of enclosed check \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail Address(es) _____

I certify that I (we) live or own property in the Bonny Doon Planning District.

Clip out and mail to RBDA, P.O. Box 551, Felton, CA 95018.

Dues mostly go for printing and mailing **The Highlander**, your voice for keeping Bonny Doon rural and natural.

Additional contributions are gladly accepted and greatly appreciated!

*Dues paid after Nov. 30 count toward the next year.



THE Highlander

Keeping Bonny Doon Rural and Natural since 1957

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Bonny Doon's voice in preserving our special quality of life, The Highlander, is mailed free 6 times a year. RBDA Public Meetings are usually held the second Wednesdays of January, March, May, September and November. We encourage you to participate. Send correspondence to The Highlander at the above address.

Access the RBDA on the Internet at:

www.rbda.us

E-mail us at:

board@rbda.us

Facebook (RBDA Members Only):

RBDA, Rural Bonny Doon Association

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**Bonny Doon Resident
Santa Cruz, CA 95060**

Feb. 10 Virtual Public Meeting: Rebuilding After the Fire

It's Time to Renew Your RBDA Membership (or Join if You Are Not a Member Yet!)

Joining or Renewing Your RBDA Membership Is Now Easier

Your membership helps keep our Bonny Doon community connected and informed! Inside this edition of *The Highlander* is a postage-paid envelope that you can use to send in your dues. Just fill it out, put in your check, and drop it in the mailbox. (Including your own stamp on the enclosed envelope will save the RBDA the cost of postage.)

This has been an incredibly difficult year for our Bonny Doon community and our hearts go out to each and every one of our neighbors here on the mountain. We know that the wonderful spirit of our community will get us through these hard times and that we are...BONNY DOON STRONG.

The RBDA is your community organization and pipeline to the Santa Cruz county government. Our volunteer board is actively advocating on behalf of Bonny Doon residents on the many issues that impact us here on Ben Lomond Mountain, including the urgent need for improved telecommunications and power infrastructure, the continuing development plan for Cotoni-Coast Dairies, PG&E power outages, tree cutting and much more. Now more than ever, we need to band together and make our voices heard.

We mail *The Highlander* to all our neighbors here in Bonny Doon, whether they are RBDA

members or not, because one of the most important parts of our job is keeping Bonny Dooners up to date on the many issues that affect them.

You may not be a member, or your membership may have lapsed! Please contact Russell Kliegel (303)246-6197 or email russell.kliegel@gmail.com if you are not sure. Or just send in your dues! If you are already current, we will apply them to next year.

This year we are asking you all to provide an email address if possible so we may continue to build our emergency email database. We will NEVER share your email address with a 3rd party without your permission. Memberships run Jan-Dec and you can only vote for officers in the Annual meeting if you have joined before December.

A majority of your membership dues and donations go to publishing and printing *The Highlander* and rent/insurance at the school for our public meetings (if we ever get to meet again in person!).

The RBDA is a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization, so donations are not tax-deductible. We have that designation because it allows us to legally lobby for laws and regulations that are important to Bonny Doon.

Project Daffodil: Community School Foundation's Living Tribute to Bonny Doon

Thank you to all the organizers of Project Daffodil who have worked to bring a symbol of bright and enduring promise to Bonny Doon—and also raised \$15,000 for Bonny Doon School.

A reminder from the RBDA to protect the biodiversity and ethnobotanical history of our mountain. Do not plant bulbs in wild or protected land. Please plant your daffodil bulbs only on your own property in developed areas. Do not plant on roads near shared or recovering lands.

If you placed an order, pick up your bulbs in the bus barn on Ice Cream Grade. Please wear a mask, park on the road, and walk down. The pick-up times are: Saturday, January 23, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Sunday, January 24, 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.; and Saturday, January 30, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

