

# Author has 'romance' with Cannon Beach

## Wheeler and Nehalem a backdrop for romance series

By Lyra Fontaine  
For Cannon Beach Gazette

From impassioned citizens at Cannon Beach city meetings to the antique stores and charm of small towns, author Mindy Hardwick has found no shortage of writing material on the North Coast.

"I feel like I have lots of stories I can write for a long time," she said with a laugh.

Hardwick, a part-time Cannon Beach resident since 2013, writes contemporary romance, young adult and children's books. She also facilitates poetry workshops at the Denney Youth Juvenile Justice Center in Washington state and will soon publish a memoir on the experience.

Hardwick decided to pursue writing while teaching seventh grade.

"I took my kids to a young authors conference and I really resonated with the children's writers," she said.

In 2002, Hardwick was selected to work with youth at the National Book Award Foundation summer writing camp. At the camp, Hardwick met an author she admired, Norma Fox Mazer. Hardwick went on to receive a master's in fine arts at Vermont College of Fine Arts, where she wrote



LYRA FONTAINE/FOR CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

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Author Mindy Hardwick

two children's books.

Since then, her young adult book "Stained Glass Summer" was a 2013 EPIC eBook Award finalist and she has published sweet contemporary romance novellas.

"I had always done those stories in my head, ever since I was in my 20s," she said.

each falling in love, is available at the Cannon Beach Bookstore.

"I'll come here and say, 'If you sit here for two hours and get 1,800 words done, then you can go,'" Hardwick said. "It's very strict and I set goals."

Before writing a book, Hardwick maps out scenes and chapters and creates detailed character descriptions.

Recently, she's been writing in an unlikely place — an Applebee's near her primary home in Lake Stevens, Washington.

She started writing regularly at the restaurant and befriended a waiter who has helped her throughout the writing process, such as figuring out what dates her characters will go on. "He brought in that guy perspective," she said. "It's funny when you have someone playing with your characters with you. This is not typical for how I write my books."

Hardwick's experience getting involved in local government issues served as inspiration for scenes in a "Cranberry Bay" book.

In August, the third Cranberry Bay book, "Sweetheart Wedding," will be released.

When she's not writing at Bella Espresso, Hardwick enjoys walking the beach with her cocker spaniel, sewing, cooking and traveling.

### Memoir took 'courage'

A memoir of Hardwick's experience teaching at the juvenile justice center, "Kids in Orange: Voices from A Ju-

venile Detention," will be released early this year.

Hardwick guides young adults in writing poetry about their life experiences.

"It's very raw and honest," she said. "They were the ones who inspired me to write my memoir. It took me multiple drafts to get to that level of honesty where they go instantly. They taught me a lot about having the courage to get to that place."

Many of her students have committed drug-relat-

ed crimes, but Hardwick said their stories allow others to see that "you may have done something, but that's not completely who you are."

After the workshop, the children might be released or start a long-term program.

"There's so much that they're working with and that you're working against," Hardwick said.

Hardwick will read from the memoir in May at the Cannon Beach Library as part of an authors series.

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## Music night!



R.J. MARX/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Thursday nights are music night at Bill's Tavern and Brewhouse in Cannon Beach.

## Parenting classes offered at Seaside Heights Elementary

Northwest Parenting and the Lower Columbia Hispanic Council are offering two parenting classes held at Seaside Heights Elementary School.

Lori Honl of Northwest Head Start will lead the "ABC's of Parenting" class on Thursday nights through March 8. A dinner will be served at 6 p.m. and the class follows from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

"ABC's of Parenting" for children five to eight years is a free, seven-session group-based program. Parents learn about nurturing parenting skills and ways to promote their children's success in school. This class is taught in English only.

Maritza Beltran of the Lower Columbia Hispanic Council will lead the "Building a Better Future through Parent Leadership" class on Wednesday nights

through March 22. A dinner will be served at 6 p.m. and the class follows from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

This class is a nine-week program for parents who want to learn how to support their children academically in school. The class will be taught in Spanish only, and is for parents of children who are preschool age up to third grade. Childcare will be provided.

To enroll in the "ABC's of Parenting" program or for further information, call 503-325-8673, ext. 1; or visit [www.nworparenting.org](http://www.nworparenting.org). To enroll in the "Building a Better Future through Parent Leadership" class or for more information, call 503-325-4547; or visit [www.lchispaniccouncil.org](http://www.lchispaniccouncil.org).

Seaside Heights Elementary School is located at 2000 Spruce Drive, or call 503-738-5161.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

### Tuesday, Feb. 7

Cannon Beach City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Tuesday, Feb. 14

Cannon Beach City Council, 5:30 p.m., work session, City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Thursday, Feb. 16

Cannon Beach Parks and Community Services Committee, 9 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Cannon Beach Design Review Board, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Tuesday, Feb. 21

Cannon Beach Public Works Committee, 9 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Seaside School District, 6 p.m., 1810 S. Franklin, Seaside.

### Thursday, Feb. 23

Cannon Beach Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Friday, Feb. 24

Cannon Beach Emergency Preparedness Committee, 10 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Tuesday, March 7

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Cannon Beach Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Tuesday, April 4

Cannon Beach City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Tuesday, April 11

Cannon Beach City Council, 5:30 p.m., work session, City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Tuesday, April 18

Cannon Beach Public Works

Committee, 9 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Thursday, April 20

Cannon Beach Parks and Community Services Committee, 9 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Cannon Beach Design Review Board, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

### Thursday, April 27

Cannon Beach Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St. Friday, April 28

Cannon Beach Emergency Preparedness Committee, 10 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

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