



Two competitive races for district school board

Brian Taylor runs unopposed for Cannon Beach seat

By R.J. Marx
Cannon Beach Gazette

As four seats come up for election to Seaside School District's board of directors, six candidates have stepped forward to fill those roles. Incumbents Hugh Stelson and Brian Taylor, along with newcomers Michelle Wunder-

lich, Andrea "AJ" Wahl, Karen Custer and Lori Lum filed paperwork with the Clatsop County Board of Elections as candidates for the May 16 special district election. The filing period ended Thursday.

"Right now there is an opening in each of the three communities, one in Gearhart, one in Seaside, one in Cannon Beach and one at-large," Superintendent Sheila Roley said last week. Cannon Beach voters will select one Cannon Beach and one at-large candidate.

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AT-LARGE



Michelle Wunderlich (unopposed)

ZONE 1 CANNON BEACH



Brian Taylor (unopposed)

ZONE 3 GEARHART



Andrea "AJ" Wahl



Lori Lum

ZONE 6 SEASIDE



Hugh Stelson



Karen Custer

Savor Cannon Beach

{ Exploring with an open glass }



By Rebecca Herren
Cannon Beach Gazette

Reds, whites, rosés and more were poured into awaiting glasses as wine walkers circulated through town seeking their next sip of bliss

When you spend a few days in a coastal town you soak in a lot about it. Take for instance, the Savor Cannon Beach wine walk that took place March 11.

Taste all the wine you want, but there is no substitute for tasting wine alongside those who shepherd it into existence. This was certainly true of the annual festival that saw wine walkers crisscrossing the town and spending time at more than 40 wineries set up at a multitude of locations from the town's community halls to lodgings, eateries, art galleries and bakeries. Not even the weather could cast a dark cloud over those attending.

Wineries from Oregon and Washington set up their stations with a dizzying array of their top shelf, high-point receivers and medalists.

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ABOVE, Nicholas Gates shares wine from Gresser Vineyard at the chamber of commerce community hall.

RIGHT, Wine from Skylite Cellars.

REBECCA HERREN/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE



Water rates could rise 40 percent

Infrastructure needs drive proposed hikes

By R.J. Marx
Cannon Beach Gazette

If Cannon Beach residents soon feel a little more of their money trickling away, they might look to their water bills.

Residents face hikes of up to 40 percent in July to fund needed water, wastewater and storm-drain repairs and maintenance.

The City Council plans to endorse capital improvements for those improvements at its April 4 meeting.

In line with others

"The new rates will put us in line with what our neighbors to the north and south are already paying," City Councilor George Vetter said. "Even though it's quite a bit more, it's still in line with what people in the area are paying."

Vetter said rates have not gone up in 10 years.

The average Cannon Beach homeowner's water and wastewater bill is in the "low \$40s," Public Works Director Dan Grassick said.

Increases will be included in the base rate and in usage costs.

"The more water you use, the more you're going to pay," Grassick said.

An average home's water and wastewater bill of \$41.65 would be adjusted to \$57.68, he said.

An increase in storm drain charges would add to monthly fees. Homeowners are now billed \$4.77 per month for storm use, a number likely to increase.

Improving infrastructure

If recommendations from the Civil West Engineering Services study commissioned by the city are adopted, rate increases will finance up to \$6 million in water infrastructure costs, including replacement of two water tanks.

Driving the hike is the city's new water and wastewater master plans, which show a need to finance about \$5 million to \$6 million of "Priority 1" water projects — ones that should be done now — and about \$2 million in wastewater costs.

The biggest expense is replacement or rebuilding of the city's water-storage tanks. One tank holds 1.6 million gallons; the second holds 1 million gallons. "The two big storage tanks need work or replacement to withstand seismic events," Grassick said.

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Urbani's 'Landfall' inspired by Hurricane Katrina

Author speaks of personal grief in wake of tragedy

By Rebecca Herren
Cannon Beach Gazette

On a rain-soaked afternoon, March 11, author Ellen Urbani spoke to an engaged audience as the guest of the Cannon Beach Library's Northwest Author Series. Urbani mingled with the audience, introduced herself to individuals and took a seat among the many who dared to venture out into the elements.

Urbani opted to let the audience decide the fate of the hour. She could talk about her approach to writing "Landfall" or spend most of the hour reading passages from the book. Choosing the former, each person listened intently

to the backstory of how Urbani came to write "Landfall."

When the storm hit, Urbani a former mental health specialist for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and advisory board member at the Annenberg Center for Health Science Research, had recently given birth to her second child and was unable to travel to New Orleans.

Urbani explained that if able, she would have been the person who went in to set up evacuee centers and provide mental health care. "The children's father went to New Orleans and was there doing emergency medicine. I was on the phone consulting with people who were down there,

but I was not on the ground when that storm hit. "Hurricane Katrina changed my life in a lot of ways even though I wasn't there when it happened. But Katrina was a significant fracture for me in the way it was for a lot of people who survived that storm in that your life was different the day after the storm than it was the day before," she added.

Her husband did return, but not to his family. She found herself newly divorced and on her own with two young children. She resigned from her job as a medical counselor in cancer centers and took a leap of faith to write fulltime. She

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REBECCA HERREN

Author Ellen Urbani signs books at the Cannon Beach Library.