



Seaside celebrates

# FOURTH OF JULY

in style — and partially in the dark

PHOTO BY KATHERINE LACAZE

Fireworks illuminate the sky above an otherwise dark Seaside during the 2015 Fourth of July fireworks show.

By Katherine Lacaze  
Seaside Signal

The 2015 Fourth of July celebration for Seaside brought with it the traditional festivities — a well-attended parade, old-fashioned social and hordes of people — as well as a few differences — such as a spectacular fireworks show without the accompanying soundtrack and a large power outage.

During the mid-morning hours, spectators started lining the streets of downtown Seaside in anticipation for the annual parade, which traveled from Necanicum Drive, south on Hol-



Olivia and Lukas Esnard having fun at the Gearhart Independence Day parade.

JEFF TER HAR PHOTO

laday Drive, west on Broadway, north on Columbia Street and ended on Necanicum Drive, near the Seaside Museum.

The parade, which was organized by a volunteer group led by Gini Dideum, included 63 entries. Among the entries were the Seaside Police Department, Seaside Fire & Rescue, Medix Ambulance Service, Providence Seaside Hospital, Avamere at Seaside, Suzanne Elise and other agencies and organizations. Three drum and bugle corps, including the Portland-based Oregon Crusaders, were spaced among the entries and provided a soundtrack of patriotic music.

Businesses and individuals of all ages took part in the parade, vehicles or floats decked out with American flags, stars and stripes or other red, white and blue displays to celebrate the spirit of Independence Day.

Overall, everything went fine in terms of preparing for and running the parade, Dideum said, adding “we can always use some help.”

“We learned some things this year, some things we can change and we can work on improving on,” Dideum said. Using that information, the group can “go ahead for next year and see what develops.”

## Power outage darkens Fourth of July celebration

By Katherine Lacaze  
Seaside Signal

As the renowned Seaside Fourth of July fireworks show crescendoed to its finale and then died out, the commencement also marked the end of a five-hour power outage that affected the entire city and produced negative effects for some local businesses, particularly restaurants.

“It was a disaster, to put it simply,” said Doug Wiese, co-owner of Dooger’s Seafood and Grille.

After shutting down the restaurant about 5 p.m., Wiese kept on a crew for about two hours, hoping the power would come back. With the early closure, thousands of dollars of income were lost and people weren’t able to work. Wiese estimates the restaurant lost upwards of \$10,000.

The total economic impact has yet to be calculated — some businesses were affected more than others.

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## Gearhart councilors seek to replace city’s ‘decrepit’ fire station

By R.J. Marx  
Seaside Signal

Despite the failure of a \$3.75 million bond in 2006 to build a new fire station, the Gearhart City Council took fresh steps toward the old station’s replacement. At the Wednesday, July 1 meeting, councilors said they hope to involve a wider range of voices in the discussion from the start.

“I’m wondering if it should be a broader base to begin with,” City Councilor Sue Lorain said. “I think go big, with lots of input, then go from there.”

In March, replacing or renovating the fire station was enumerated as the council’s top 2015 goal. Other goals included investigating system devel-

opment charges, revamping the city website and updating the city’s comprehensive plan.

When the community voted in 2006 on a \$3.75 million general obligation bond measure to address the problem, the proposal included plans for a high-end building to house the police department, City Hall and fire station.

“Several years ago there was a bond issue put together by the Fire Department with no citizen input at all,” City Manager Chad Sweet said. “To a lot of people it seemed to be extremely expensive with a lot of bells and whistles that may not have been necessary.”

Sweet is a 17-year Gearhart firefighter and currently serves as a lieutenant



R.J. MARX PHOTO

Members of the Gearhart City Council are seeking a replacement for the city’s firehouse.

with the department. “The decrepit building is the No. 1 concern,” he said. “How do we take care of the community in the event of a calamity when a building falls on top of our fire trucks? It’s naturally an emergency center, but it’s woefully inadequate for that.”

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## Transportation district eyeing new service options, solutions for future

### Agency hopes to eventually build transit hub in Seaside

By Katherine Lacaze  
Seaside Signal

The Sunset Empire Transportation District’s information kiosk in Seaside, which opened May 8, may be a prelude to more efforts by the public transit agency to increase its presence and services in the city.

The kiosk is a good place for people to get transit information, maps or

tickets and passes, but in recent years, the district has recognized the need for a bigger transportation facility in Seaside, said Jeff Hazen, the district’s executive director.

A few years ago, the district received a matching grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation’s ConnectOregon program to build a facility in Seaside, but when the agency couldn’t muster the necessary matching funds, it had to decline the grant and temporarily abandon the project. At that time, the project involved a part-

nership with a daycare and the South County Community Food Bank, which has since moved. More recently, the district has considered other funding options to build a Seaside transit center but nothing has materialized yet, and the project is entirely dependent on funding, Hazen said.

“It’s something I am going to keep my eye on,” he said.

As opposed to the small Seaside customer service kiosk, located at the Seaside Factory Outlet Center on North Roosevelt Drive, the facility would be a one-stop transit hub that would have a lobby, restrooms and more waiting areas, as well as parking options for people taking longer trips.

Additionally, Hazen said, the district always is

A Seaside transit center ‘is something I am going to keep my eye on.’

Jeff Hazen, Sunset Empire Transportation District executive director

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## Conservancy brings seed bank violets closer to home

### Flowers to be used in prairie habitat restoration project

By Katherine Lacaze  
Seaside Signal

The North Coast Land Conservancy recently received a large delivery at its Circle Creek Habitat Reserve: About 16,000 early blue violet plants, tucked safely in beds until the flowers are ready to be planted in the fall.

On June 30, Stewardship Director Melissa Reich and the conservancy’s summer stewardship crew guided the violets’ journey from a nursery in Tillamook to the Circle Creek property, where they will stay for the time being.

Come fall, the violets, which were grown using seeds propagated from the seeds of native Clatsop County plants, will be taken to their permanent homes on the Clatsop Plains and Long Beach Peninsula.

“The plants have had a long journey, and they have a long journey ahead of them,” Reich said.

The journey started when the conservancy gathered seeds from flowers growing on its salt spray meadow properties on the Clatsop Plains. Those seeds were sent to the Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Plant Materials Center in Corvallis, where they were planted to make a full bed of flowers. Once the flowers had matured, the center gathered a bag of their

seeds and sent them to the conservancy as part of a process known as seed banking, land conservancy Executive Director Katie Voelke said.

In January 2014, staff and volunteers planted about 16,000 seeds into individual containers at the Northwest Oregon Restoration Partnership’s native plant nursery in Tillamook. Since the coast seeds were grown in the valley, the group wanted to re-adapt them to the coastal climate. More than a year later, the conservancy went back to collect thousands of burgeoning shoots.

“There are a few generations involved in these violets,” Voelke said of the tiny plants now soaking up sunshine and rain at Circle Creek. It was important, she said,



KATHERINE LACAZE PHOTO

On June 30, the North Coast Land Conservancy brought numerous beds of early blue violets to the organization’s Circle Creek property, just south of Seaside.

to maintain the flowers’ coast genetics for the sake of the project.

In the fall, the conservancy will reach out to volunteers to

plant the flowers at its property on the Long Beach Peninsula and the Clatsop Plains.

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