

# Meet the Merchant

Interview by Emily Lindblom [elindblom@crbizjournal.com](mailto:elindblom@crbizjournal.com)



CAROLYN HOARD

Ron Keebler, wearing a clear mask to protect from the coronavirus, stands in front of his photographs at Oregon Gallery in Cannon Beach.

## Oregon Gallery

**Ron Keebler**, owner and photographer  
223 N. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach, 503-436-0817  
15 Broadway St., Seaside, 503-738-0577  
252 Taylor St., Eugene, 541-684-0045  
[oregongallery.com](http://oregongallery.com)

### Could you introduce yourself?

"I'm Ron Keebler."

### Could you tell me about the gallery?

"We've been here in Cannon Beach for 34 years and at the Seaside gallery for 12 years."

### How did the gallery start?

"We started out doing art fairs in Eugene and the Portland Saturday market. The first store we owned was in Corvallis. The owner of this building here contacted us when a previous business moved out and that's how we got here."

### And how did you get your start in photography?

"We started in the 70s, that's when I picked it up and decided to make a living doing it. I kind of taught myself. I was going to University of Oregon at the time."

### You said "we." Who do you mean?

"My wife, Laurie, and I. We've been married forever."

Laurie: "I do the framing and buying for the stores. We started doing consignments and now we buy from artists we know personally."

### That's great, thank you.

### Ron, what's the inspiration behind your photos?

"It's the Oregon landscape, the best in the world. The Oregon Coast is over the top."

### Yes, I'm sure many people would agree with you! What are your favorite places, times of day and types of weather to photograph?

"I really like here. Cannon Beach is really pretty. The North Oregon Coast and mid Oregon Coast too are beautiful. I'm an early riser so I do a lot of sunrises. It seems like the sunset ones usually turn out better. Sunrises tend to be pinker."

"Clouds definitely add to a picture, it could work either way. Like this one here, the clouds make it an entirely different picture."

### What advice would you give to an aspiring photographer?

"You have to take a lot of photographs and move around a lot. Take sunrises and sunsets, the photographs are best when the light's the lowest."

### What are some challenges to enter into the photography business?

"Getting yourself out there is the biggest challenge. And you've got to be sort of a weather predictor."

### Oh wow, so you pay a lot of attention to the weather? Are there other things you take into account, like the tides?

"Tides are a very important deal and you have to worry about it taking you out there as well. I've been hit by a sneaker wave."

### Oh no! Well, what do you like to do in your free time at the coast?

"Walk and hike. I like walking down the beach. It's the absolute best. We're lucky to be around here."

### How is it being a part of the Cannon Beach photography community?

"Jake and Gina Bentley have worked here the whole time."

Laurie: "Gina manages the Seaside store and Jake manages this store."

### Do you have a favorite photo?

"It's hard to say. This triple one here is 30 years old. The quality is just as good as modern cameras because it's from film. This was taken with a large format camera using three different negatives. It's changed so much over the years. I used to use a film camera and now I use medium-format digital

cameras from Fuji film."

### Oh okay. And what kind of lenses do you use?

"I have wide lenses and telephotos and everything in between. I always carry three lenses. I used to be against zoom lenses but now I use them all the time because it's improved so much. Even 35 millimeter cameras are pretty good. With the medium format, one advantage is the ability to crop it."

### Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I do all my own printing.

Laurie: "Ron's a self-taught photographer. He learned by reading books and magazines, whatever he could get a hold of. When he shoots he thinks of places people have been to so it creates a memory."

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