

# FRIDAY EXTRA!

The Daily Astorian

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Weekend Edition

## THAT'S COOL, DADDY-O!

Locals celebrate all things Beat at the inaugural Beachnik Café



ERICK BENGEL — EO Media Group

A hearty crowd attended the inaugural Beachnik Café, held at the Cannon Beach Gallery on Valentine's Day. It represented the culmination of a two-part Beat Poets workshop presented by the Tolovana Arts Colony.



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Tracy Abel reads Allen Ginsberg's political poem, *America* at the Beachnik Café. She attended the two-part Beat Poets workshop at the Tolovana Arts Colony taught by Mark Mizell, an English teacher at Seaside High School.

By ERICK BENGEL  
EO Media Group

Given the exalted status that the mid-20th century Beat writers enjoy in America's cultural consciousness, their present-day fans may forget that Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, et al. didn't present themselves as literary demigods.

When Nehalem resident Louise Christianson met them at San Francisco's City Lights Bookstore in 1963, the "conservative girl from the Midwest" had no idea what she was getting herself into, she said.

"I never would have had to worry about a thing," she said. "These people, who were living in San Francisco at that time, in that area, were the most nonjudgmental people I have ever met

in my life. They did not care what you wore, what you did, how you looked. They cared about what was going on in your heart."

Though Ginsberg had already published his poem *Howl* (1956) and Kerouac his novel *On the Road* (1957), the writers didn't hold court, she said.

"It was like they were a group of people who read their poems and read their essays along with a lot of other people," she said. "They were funny. Ginsberg in particular had an amazing laugh, and you just couldn't not be happy in his presence. Jack was a little bit more somber."

The Beats created an atmosphere of freedom and safety, compassion and acceptance, where no one got singled out, everyone could speak his or her mind and artistic expression reigned.

And it's the atmosphere that the Tolovana Arts Colony sought to recreate at its first "Beachnik Café," held in the Cannon Beach Gallery the night of Feb. 14. Several dozen local Beat writers, readers and devotees, including Christianson, gathered to delight in all things Beat — a post-WWII countercultural movement that eschewed conformity and "the establishment" while reveling in creativity and the human condition.

With lights dimmed; candles lit; guests quaffing coffee, beer and wine; paintings encircling the podium; an emcee tapping the tumba; and jazz pulsing softly beneath the performances, the Bohemian spirit of the Beats felt alive and well and right at home in the sophisticated setting.

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## Spring's new life shows the way

By PETE BATTJES  
For The Daily Astorian

Spring is my favorite time of the year!

It is awesome to see the daffodils opening and trees budding. As new life emerges it is refreshing, inspiring and renewing. It also reminds me of the new life that God offers us.

As we approach Good Friday and Easter, we must examine an audacious claim Jesus made to His disciples before He fulfilled God's plan to die on the cross for the sins of humanity.

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6). There are many people who are confused about the way to God and Heaven. Jesus makes it plain and simple. As God, He provides the only



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Crosses on the horizon signify Easter.

way. There are no exceptions. There are not many ways to God, only one — believing in Him as the Son of God and

Savior of the world. If there were other ways to God and Heaven, then His death on the cross was not necessary.

It would have been a terrible waste! Jesus doesn't even allow for any other ways, because this is God's divine plan.

Jesus had to die to pay the sacrifice for our sin so that all who believe in Him would be forgiven and enter into a relationship with God. The way to Heaven is not about the good deeds people do, but about having faith in a good God and His divine deed of dying for our sins so we can be forgiven.

This is refreshing, inspiring and renewing! We can have a new spiritual life now and for eternity because of what Jesus accomplished. He loves each person and calls us to follow Him by faith. Jesus alone secures our eternal Home in Heaven!

Dr. Pete Battjes is the lead pastor at Lighthouse Christian Church in Warrenton.



## Beliefs

INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES FROM LOCAL CLERGY



Submitted photo

Pete Battjes is the pastor at Lighthouse Christian Church.



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