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OCEAN PARK CHEF | **NANCI MAIN**

Chef puts lid on delicious career

Main helped put Willapa Bay on culinary map

By **LUKE WHITTAKER**
EO Media Group

OCEAN PARK, Wash. — Starting out, they had to drive 30 miles to find green peppercorns. Pesto sauce was an unfamiliar term for most customers. Such was life in on the Long Beach Peninsula in 1981, a particular time and place that presented unique challenges and opportunities to two young chefs named Nanci Main and the late Jimella Lucas. Neither set out to change the culinary world, but destiny has a way of happening anyway.

“We were just wildly enthusiastic about what we were doing,” Main said, reflecting on the roots of her culinary career last week.

“We loved it. We were passionate and we celebrated it.” May 27, will mark the final day of regular operation for the Nanci & Jimella’s Café & Cocktails in Ocean Park, concluding a culinary career that spanned more than 45 years — one as deeply personal as it was widely publicized.

Debt of gratitude

Nanci and Jimella didn’t seek fame, but it found them.

“I’ll forever have a debt of gratitude to James Beard,” the famous food writer, Main said.

“We were young chefs just starting out when he walked in our door.” Beard recognized greatness when he saw it. “He knew right away what we were doing,” Main said, “and he wrote us up in his column.”

This support from the press — including articles in The New York Times and Newsweek — helped draw new visitors to a remote little port town.

Memories flood over Nanci when asked about The Ark, the iconic restaurant she and Jimella ran for more than 20 years in Nahcotta overlooking Willapa Bay.

“Nahcotta wasn’t on the map — people couldn’t find it,” Main said. “Because of all the support, we started to bring a whole new kind of tourism into the area.”

“The kitchen was built by a chef and it was huge,” said Main extolling the virtues of the architecture, but it was the experience and the people along the way that still resonate strongest.

“There’s one guy that would bring oranges, another brought asparagus. There were so many traditions that would happen with food every year,” she said.

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Seaside builds new campus, patches old

District to add staff, meet new science rules

By **R.J. MARX**
The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — With a building project ready to launch and the state boosting coffers, the Seaside School District’s budget committee has approved a \$20.6 million operating budget.

With an improving state economy, timber revenue and “excellent management,” the district plans to move forward without reductions in staffing or programs, Superintendent Sheila Roley said in a budget message.



Sheila Roley

The school district plans to hire an elementary school guidance counselor and a new high school science and math teacher, among other personnel additions. The budget addresses rising student technology costs, with districtwide licenses for math and science software. A new science curriculum will be implemented in the fall to meet new science and technology standards.

A full-time licensed staff member will be hired to provide management support to

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Equal pay bill lets some get back wages

Senate OKs amended bill; back to the House

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — The state Senate unanimously passed an equal pay bill Wednesday that would allow workers to recover up to two years of back pay by filing a complaint with the Bureau of Labor and Industries.

Senators amended a House bill to win support from the business community, which had previously opposed stiff penalties in the original bill.

“It is currently illegal in Oregon to pay someone differently for the same work,” said state Sen. Kathleen Taylor, D-Portland. “Our current legal system is not working. We know far too many people are being paid less for the same work.”



Kathleen Taylor

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Photos by Luke Whittaker/EO Media Group
A welcoming atmosphere and ambiance was characteristic of Main, no matter what was on the menu. “People can come in from clamming or they can come in all dressed up for their anniversary and feel comfortable,” she said.



Ocean Park, Wash., chef Nanci Main has prepared meals for presidents, been featured in numerous TV, radio and personal appearances, won awards and written books, but her proudest accomplishment are the people she mentored and inspired, and the legacy she and the late Jimella Lucas leave behind.

‘I’m proud of the things we emphasize — value in food and community.’

Nanci Main | Ocean Park chef

For sale: When Oregon farm, ranch lands change hands

By **ERIC MORTENSON**
EO Media Group

Diane Daggett remembers the conversation with the woman who had just purchased the Daggett family’s 440-acre cattle ranch in northeast Oregon’s Wallowa County, land that had been in the family for four generations.

The buyer said she had called her husband, who was aboard their yacht in the Cayman Islands, to share the news. “Honey,” the woman said she’d told him, “I just bought the most amazing birthday gift

for you.”

And the land, sold by Daggett’s stepmother for what Daggett figures was three times what it could generate as a cattle ranch, slipped from the family’s grasp. Now it lies behind a locked gate.

Variations of that story are playing out across Oregon and other states as farm and ranch land changes hands, sometimes by thousands of acres at a time. Some buyers are fellow farmers who are expanding their operations under the mantra of “get big or get out.” But other buyers include investment firms,

wind energy developers, conservation organizations, companies that fit the description of “Big Ag” and wealthy individuals looking to establish private hunting reserves or vacation retreats.

Primary worry

The impact is unclear at this point, but the primary worry is about ag land being taken out of production. Jim Johnson, the state’s Department of Agriculture’s land-use and water planning coordinator, said ag land

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Eric Mortenson/EO Media Group

The 8,000-acre Murtha Ranch along the John Day River near Condon, was purchased by the Western Rivers Conservancy for \$7.9 million. The group sold it for the same price to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, which developed it into Cottonwood Canyon State Park. As a nod to traditional uses, hunting and fishing are allowed, and state officials are developing a grazing plan that may be put into effect next spring.

