



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Guests raised their glasses in a toast to Gearhart's 100th anniversary.

Gearhart celebrates city's 100th anniversary

Crowd fills firehouse

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

GEARHART — Cries of "happy birthday" rang out as hundreds of residents old and young filled the firehouse Sunday to mark the 100th anniversary of Gearhart. The former town of Clatsop formally incorporated in 1918 after a vote.

Bill Berg, the author of "Gearhart Remembered: An Informal History," published in 1990, stood by a Victrola playing fox trots and tangos as visitors entered the ample fire hall.

"This is the birthday of the city of Gearhart," Berg said. "This is a birthday for people, not historic landmarks. It marks the moment we gained control of our own destiny as a city. ... We became an autonomous entity."

The 79-year-old Berg celebrated his first birthday in



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian
Gearhart historian Bill Berg greets visitors to the city's 100-year celebration.

Gearhart as a seasonal resident before moving here full time 45 years ago.

Berg told the audience that of the many contentious issues that have divided the city over the years, none was more bitterly fought than when Gearhart joined the Seaside School District in 1959.

Berg shared the microphone with 95-year-old Bob

McEwan. McEwan recalled days when he worked for the opulent Gearhart Hotel, the destination location run by Portland department store magnate Myron Frank.

Jon Blissett, at 80, Gearhart's oldest firefighter, remembered the days he ran a Chevron station on the corner of Pacific Way. The station closed in 1992.

Nearby, a slideshow spun images of historic buildings and scenes.

Visitors sipped prosecco as volunteers from the Gearhart Homeowners' Association did a brisk business in memberships and sweatshirts.

Mayor Matt Brown was one of three mayors to attend the festivities. Former mayors Kent Smith and Dianne Widop were also in attendance.

"It means a lot for the whole community," Brown said. "It's great to see everybody celebrating, unifying from the whole community. It's really about the people of the last 100 years who have made this place special."

Oregon marijuana lawsuit is settled

Controversy likely to continue

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Bureau

Rural landowners in Oregon have settled a lawsuit that accused their marijuana-growing neighbors of violating federal anti-racketeering law and reducing property values.

However, the question of whether Oregon marijuana growers can be successfully sued under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act may still be answered, as a similar lawsuit was recently filed against another cannabis operation.

Last year, Rachel and Erin McCart of Beavercreek filed a RICO complaint against more than 40 defendants

involved in medical marijuana production, including landowners, growers, retailers and a bank.

Apart from lowering the value of their 11-acre property, the McCarts claimed that two nearby marijuana operations attracted unwanted visitors, increased traffic and generated foul odors, among other problems.

While medical and recreational marijuana were legalized by Oregon voters, the plaintiffs claimed their neighbors were still subject to RICO because the substance is illegal under federal law.

"Given the strict federal prohibitions against each of those purposes, defendants knew these purposes could only be accomplished via a pattern of racketeering. In furtherance of that goal, defen-

dants pooled their resources and achieved enterprise efficiency that no one defendant could have achieved individually," the complaint said.

The complaint was filed on the heels of a ruling by the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled that RICO claims should be allowed to proceed against a Colorado marijuana operation.

With the large number of defendants in the Oregon case, initial procedural steps took several months before the defendants filed motions to dismiss the complaint.

U.S. Magistrate Judge John Acosta in Portland had planned to take those requests under advisement, but then stayed proceedings in the case when the parties notified him of a pending settlement.

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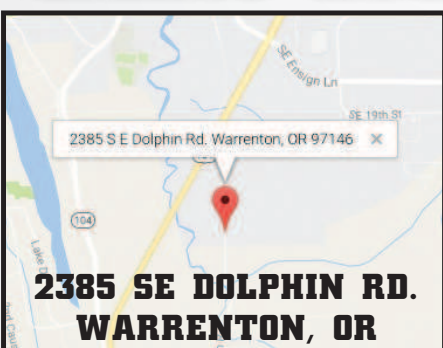
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