

# 'THE BEST THING'

## New book chronicles Cannon Beach's early artistic era

BY NANCY MCCARTHY

With its fabled scenery, Cannon Beach has always attracted artists. But when hippies began showing up with canvases, crafts and cameras in the 1960s, residents worried they would ruin the town.

"In the late '60s, early '70s, it was a time of culture clash. Cannon Beach at that time was very conservative," said Rainmar Bartl, whose new book, "The Best Thing That Ever Happened to Cannon Beach," chronicles the era between 1960 and 1985 when Cannon Beach was a true artists' colony. "The city fathers in those days were freaked out by all of these young hippies coming to town."

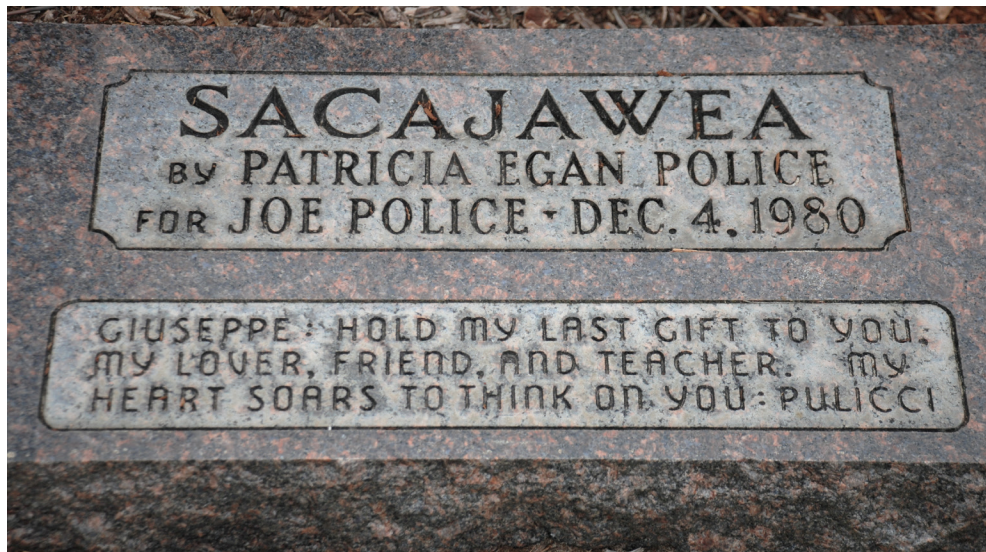
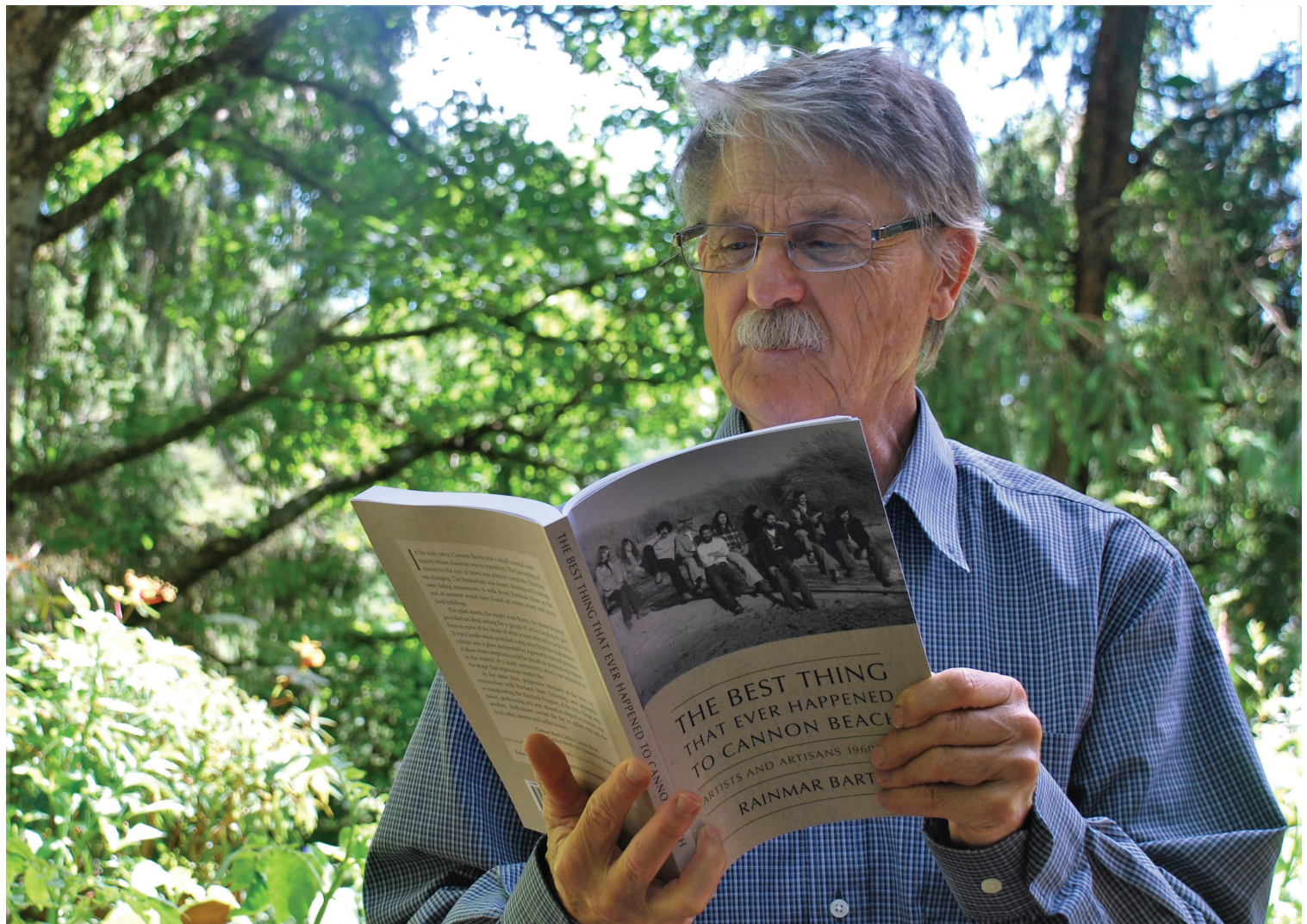
Despite residents' fears, however, the arts focus became what then-Mayor Gerald Gower called the "most wonderful thing that ever happened to Cannon Beach."

Bartl, a retired city planner who moved to Cannon Beach in the 1970s and observed the village's evolution as a close-knit artistic community, tried to capture that history before it was too late.

"It was a special time in Cannon Beach; I thought there should be a record of it," Bartl said. "Some of our friends started getting sick and dying, and I thought, 'Now's the time.'"

The book consists of short biographies and

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Photos by Nancy McCarthy

**TOP:** Rainmar Bartl looks at his book 'The Best Thing That Ever Happened to Cannon Beach.'  
**LEFT:** A plaque at the bottom of a life-sized wire sculpture pays tribute to artist Joe Police, who was commissioned to create the piece.

### Where to purchase the book

'The Best Thing That Ever Happened to Cannon Beach' by Rainmar Bartl

Available at Cannon Beach Book Co. and Jupiter's Books in Cannon Beach; Beach Books in Seaside

Bartl will sign books from noon to 2 p.m. Aug. 3, at Cannon Beach Book Co.



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