

# It's time to leave the nest

Parents aren't supposed to have more affection for one child over the other, and many say they don't.

But I'm not one of those. I have to admit that, after all these years, I do have a favorite: the *Cannon Beach Gazette*.

It's not the first paper I've ever edited, but it (probably) will be the last.

Oh, it has a sister, which definitely tugs at my heartstrings. The *Seaside Signal* is always brimming over with news and features about the issues and activities of Seaside and Gearhart.

But it's the *Gazette* that I started with, eight years ago, when I first moved to Cannon Beach permanently. My first interview as the paper's full-time editor was conducted two hours after I deposited my suitcases in my little house on the north side of town. It was with John Newman, chef extraordinaire of Newmans 988.

What better way to get a taste of the town I had already fallen in love with!

I came to know and respect Cannon Beach's residents, their concerns, their adventures, their often quirky lifestyles.

Through eight years of City Council meetings, I have witnessed city officials take on daunting projects (passage of a \$4 million bond measure to buy 800 acres of watershed during a national recession — really? Are you nuts?), and yet farsighted (purchase 55 acres of tsunami-safe land for essential buildings; create an inner city trail; develop escape routes and systems in anticipation of the Big One).

Some schemes seemed outlandish: Stash shipping containers in the woods to hold barrels purchased by residents to store emergency supplies; erect a charging station for electric cars before electric cars started coming to Cannon Beach; develop a method of doling out lodging taxes to bring arts events — and overnight visitors — to town.

I never thought when I arrived here that I would ever find enough news to fill the pages. But I've always had the opposite problem: not enough pages to hold all the news.

The same goes for this column: In eight years of writing it, I've never been without a topic to explore.

What keeps me here — what will keep me here permanently? The people, the beauty, the "family" I have found and the sense of being at home.

There are way too many people I have met through the years and have truly grown fond of to mention here. The difference between living in a big city and living in Cannon Beach is the amount of care we have for one another. It goes beyond the surface of the brusque "hi, how're doing?" When people here ask how you are doing, they really want to know.

Although people here may know what's going on in your personal life (no, we aren't above gossiping; it's still a small town, you know), they keep out of it. They let you find your own way, and if they are asked for help, they are always ready and willing to give it.

## IMPRESSIONS

By  
NANCY  
McCARTHY



**Who knows what happens next? But while I'm leaving the business, I'm not leaving the community**

That's why it has been such a pleasure to be an editor and reporter for the *Gazette* all these years. I've been privileged to observe and chronicle the incredulous, crazy, amazing, thoughtful, fantastic, mind-blowing, gut-wrenching, hysterical and sobering events, issues and people of Cannon Beach — and all of South Clatsop County — during what I consider the best years of my life.

Now, it's time to step away from my role as chief observer and chronicler, and turn over the responsibility as editor of the *Cannon Beach Gazette* and the *Seaside Signal* to someone else.

My retirement on March 20 will, I expect, allow me to become involved in my community instead of being the objective third party. Hopefully, my friends

and those who have always known me as the "reporter" or the "editor" or even the "columnist" won't feel that they have to tell me, "This is off the record" or warn others to "be careful of what you say because it will end up in print."

Yes, I do expect to do some freelance writing and maybe even work on projects that need a writer's touch. But I also expect that, as I close the door on this part of my life, another door will open that will allow me to be truly part of the community of volunteers, of activists that I have come to admire.

This is what is so exciting about living on the North Coast: We are a small band of people (I have lived in neighborhoods elsewhere that have larger populations than all of Clatsop County) who get things done. In my eight years here, I have seen huge projects accomplished, all because people here know how to work together. They combine their experience, their intelligence, their connections and their compassion into a joint effort, and they move mountains of barriers to accomplish their goals.

I want to be part of that. In this next stage of my life, I want to do more than write about it; I want to experience it.

People who know about my impending retirement ask me what I'm going to do. I jokingly tell them I'm going to "sleep in."

But, in fact, I don't plan to doze through the rest of my life. Yes, I've heard a rumor that there's an ocean to the west of us, and I do plan to catch up on some long overdue beach walks. May-

be now that I won't be sitting in front of a computer for numerous hours a day, I'll get more exercise. Casual conversations over coffee with friends in the middle of the afternoon won't be unheard of. Perhaps I can catch up on my reading — without feeling I have to edit every sentence.

But I'm looking forward to finding out what else is out there, how I might put what little talent I have to work for others. As my friends and co-workers will testify, I don't feel comfortable being too lazy for too long.

I admit, it will be wrenching to turn the newspapers over to someone else. They, indeed, feel like my children.

Every week they start out as a casual list of story ideas, and as the days continue, they are formed and shaped into living stories that are meant to inform, entertain and call to action. They may irritate some readers, satisfy others, spark a laugh or trigger tears, but they are meant to reflect the community that we have decided to be a part of.

Those stories, however, will be in good hands with reporters Erick Bengel and Katherine Lacaze who have honed their knowledge about the North Coast and have come to respect those who live here. They will do fine for you.

I never really thought about retirement, but, after 48 years in the newspaper business (I started, of course, when I was 3 years old...), perhaps it's time to try something different.

Who knows what happens next? But while I'm leaving the business, I'm not leaving the community.

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## Grants available for nonprofits

Community services grants will be distributed to nonprofit organizations by the Cannon Beach Parks and Community Services Committee this year.

Nonprofit organizations providing programs or projects in arts, educational, recreational, environmental, community or social services in Cannon Beach are invited to apply for funds.

Applications are available at Cannon Beach City Hall, 163 E. Gower St., P.O. Box 368, Cannon Beach, OR 97110, or electronically at [www.ci.cannon-beach.or.us](http://www.ci.cannon-beach.or.us).

Applications must be submitted by 2 p.m. April 22. They should be mailed to: City of Cannon Beach Parks and Community Services Committee P.O. Box 368, Cannon Beach, OR 97110 Attention: Jennifer Barrett.

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