

## CB named Tree City

Tree from Page 1A

Friends of Cannon Beach Trees filled out the application and expect to officially receive that designation in April, she added.

In Oregon, the Department of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Program administers Tree City USA and provides guidance. Siebert-Wahrmund said they'll be able to teach community members how to properly plant and care for the trees that help clean the air and provide habitat.

"Tree education is the key component of this program and we're excited about the many possibilities it offers," she added.

During the 12 Days event, Friends of Cannon Beach Trees will be offering educational experiences for those of all ages, along with planting, pruning and protection.

Cannon Beach was a Tree City USA honoree in the past, but let that status lapse. To keep the designation, Siebert-Wahrmund said, the city will have to demonstrate a commitment to trees by meeting the four criteria each year.

## Breakers Point dune grading OK'd

Grading from Page 1A

who represents Breakers Point homeowners. Normally the sand would blow into the forest, he said, but invasive European grass planted years ago is causing the sand to pile up into nearly 50-foot-tall dunes.

"I believe our application is going to help take it back to a more natural state," Breakers Point homeowner Carol Keljo told the Planning Commission last week, the second of two hearings held on the topic this summer.

Bruce Francis, property manager of the Breakers Point Homeowners Association, said removal of European grass and planting of native species will restore native dune prairie ecosystems.

Ocean views and beach access were also concerns.

"The whole concept of Breakers Point was that you could see the breakers," condo owner Frank Patrick said.

Patrick said he can no longer see the ocean from his home, and can only see the top portion of Haystack Rock. The loss of a view has decreased his property value, he added.

Cannon Beach resident Susan Neuwirth, who is not a Breakers Point homeowner, said the decision to grade the dunes will also improve beach access for all residents.

Friends of Dunes representative Clay Newton expressed concerns with revegetation. He said only small areas of the project would be protected by the new native plantings. The grading may also result in sand blown onto neighboring properties.

He added that the views are a homeowner's privilege, not a right, as the beach is owned by the state.

Cannon Beach resident Jan Siebert-Wahrmund said waiting for a more comprehensive sand man-

agement plan could help protect habitats, improve residents' shared quality of life and provide better emergency protection.

Grading would make little difference either way in a catastrophic quake or tsunami, Francis replied.

### Search for native plants

At the commission's request, representatives of Breakers Point said they would begin looking for native plants as soon as this week.

Plants may take five years before they are fully established, although success could be determined after six months, Francis said, and positive effects from the grading should last nearly a decade.

The experimental nature of the project worried Commissioner Lisa Kerr.

"Mr. Horning said science doesn't change," Kerr said. "That may be

true, but our knowledge and understanding of science does change."

Kerr suggested moving forward with the grading as nearby streets were recently given permission for a similar amount of sand.

Kerr said she wants to see the science of the city's sand management plan before endorsing the Breakers Point proposal.

Francis said Breakers Point homeowners will work with the Planning Commission's conditions and collaborate with the city and state "in the future," at which time the homeowners association would likely return for new dune grading permits.

Commissioner Hank Johnson was the only nay vote on Aug. 27. Commissioners Kerr, Bob Lundy, Joseph Bernt and Ryan Dewey voted yes.

Janet Patrick recused herself as a Breakers Point homeowner.

## Dune ordinance put on hold

Ordinance from Page 1A

He added that such an ordinance could be subject to an appeal to the Land Use Boards of Appeals, however. Benefield said he didn't think that was a reason not to do it.

Councilor Wendy Higgins said LUBA appeals cost the city money and voted against the new ordinance. Benefield, Mayor Sam Steidel, Council President Melissa Cadwalader and Councilor George Vetter voted in favor of it.

The ordinance will have to go through the Planning Commission before coming before the council, likely in November.

The City Council also:

- approved a Charter Communications contract extension
- appointed new members to the Public Works and Budget Committees. The Emergency Preparedness Committee is still seeking members.

## 5 Minutes with... Blue Bond

Painter 'makes art happen'

By Dani Palmer  
Cannon Beach

He's new to Cannon Beach, but Blue Bond has been doing his art for over 40 years. The painter learned from some of the best and exhibits his paintings in art shows throughout the West. Over his lifetime, Bond estimates he has completed more than 2,500 paintings.

Now he teaches art classes and sells his paintings at the Blue Bond Studio and Gallery in Sandpiper Square, right next to the Jeffrey Hull Gallery.

Bond's gallery opened this summer and is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Thursday through Sunday, and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Monday. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays, Bond and his wife, Karen, travel back to Vancouver, Wash., where he teaches art courses at their studio and gallery there.

**Q: How'd you end up opening shop in Cannon Beach?**

**A:** We came over here to see

about putting our paintings up in someone else's gallery and there was a for lease sign in the window. I thought, "Wow, I've never seen Cannon Beach with a gallery available." I just jumped right on it, and that's how we got it.

**Q: Tell me about your artwork. Is there anything in particular you like to paint?**

**A:** I paint Western themes. I like to do animals, like horses, and portraits and people.

**Q: How'd you get started in art?**

**A:** I started when I was in grade school. I've always been interested in art. All my life. I really excelled in drawing and things like that. It just developed from that. And I've spent 40 years pursuing that. It's a type of thing you never master. You just try to get better. Some people say to me, "Oh you're so fortunate. You can paint." There's not fortunate. It's thousands and thousands of hours



a person wants to put into that, learn how to do that. You never, ever master this. I've never talked to a painter in my life who just said, "I'm there." Somebody will say, "Which is your best painting?" and I truly believe an artist will answer "Maybe my next one." I think it's that way with anything we do. We always want to get better and better and better.

**Q: What do you offer at the studio and gallery here?**

**A:** I offer art classes for someone that would want to do a private

art class right here in the studio. I do commissioned portraits. A lot of people bring in photos of their dogs or their horses or their children or a self-portrait. They'll drop them off and I paint that right here in the studio. I'm kind of unique here that I paint in the studio. People are really interested in watching the art happen.

**Q: Do you work with people of all art skill levels?**

**A:** I do. I like to work with adults. I teach people how to paint, how

to look at a photograph and paint it on a canvas. It's looking at something and being able to paint it. With the use of cameras today, you don't have to be a master drawer. You can use all these aids, like cameras and projectors, to help you. That gives you the ability to concentrate strictly on how to put paint on a canvas. I've had professional artists come in and spend time with me just to learn how to paint fast.

**Q: What's it been like being in Cannon Beach with all these other artists?**

**A:** Oh, it's incredible! They're so interesting because they're extremely talented. It's really nice when they stop by my studio — that we can talk art. It's like anything else. If you're talking with somebody in your profession, you understand each other better. Another interesting thing is people come in from Canada or Wyoming or Montana, and some find my art refreshing because many people here paint the rock or the ocean. I said I wasn't going to do that rock because everyone else has done it and has done it so well it's intimidating, but I'm starting to get into it. It's really made an impact on my life. Much more than anywhere else I've ever been.

## Sweet Basil's

Cannon Beach eatery delivers fresh ingredients

Review by MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA

It was a gorgeous summer evening, the shadows just growing long. With clams and Osso Buco before me and an iced mug of beer at my side, Dr. John came over the stereo. The rich, indulgent tastes coupled with the canonical New Orleans singer's raspy swamp funk whisked me away, far from Cannon Beach.

Which, I imagine, is pretty much what owner and chef John Sowa intended. While Sowa originally hails from New York, he studied in Louisiana under one of the original celebrity chefs, Paul Prudhomme. After a decade or so in the region, Sowa found his way to the North Coast, where he opened Little Bayou in Seaside. It was big, boasted live music regularly, a lively array of hot sauce and a decor all befitting of the Big Easy. In 2007, though, Sowa and his wife felt it time to downsize, so he moved on to open Sweet Basil's in Cannon Beach.

At first Sowa planned to do only lunch. He found a small place with a smaller kitchen. It was — and in many ways still is — less equipped than the average home. (Rather than a stovetop, Sweet Basil's uses three portable hotplate/camping burners. As such, the menu notes that because of the

limitations, food might take awhile, though on my trips the speed was just fine.)

Demand quickly grew. "Lunch was poppin'," Sowa told me. So he attempted to expand, albeit incrementally, by offering tapas but quickly found that small plates weren't what hungry tourists wanted. And so he returned to his bayou beginnings with a full dinner menu. But he did so with a strong and unwavering sense, knowing exactly what he wanted — and what he didn't.

For dinner, my companion and I began with the Clams Mateo (\$13.50). In a white wine sauce and loaded with bacon, tomato, caramelized onions and herbs, they were as much a pleasure to look at as they were to eat. (Indeed, with clams the process can be just as enjoyable as the taste.) A table adjacent to ours devoured their own bowl so fervently that they quickly ordered a second. "We had one order and we just thought: hey, we're having another," the wide-eyed diner told me. "They're amazing." I agreed.

My companion and I then shared entrées, the Seafood Jambalaya (\$22.50) and the Pork Shank Osso Buco (\$23.50). Of the two, the taste (and presentation) of the Osso Buco towered above the Jambalaya. It was marvelously plated, standing on its head, bones jutting sky-



PHOTO BY MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA

**The Mouth found this salad to be fresh and filling, featuring a base of organic greens, cranberries, walnuts, apples and chicken (as well as a few cucumbers and some tomatoes on the side, which had no business being on the plate).**

ward out of a thick tomato sauce underneath which sat the richest, creamiest parmesan-tinged polenta the world has ever known. Removing the caramelized meat from the bones was a delight, and wrapped in the center it remained juicy and steaming hot.

The Jambalaya was less memorable, its red sauce almost bland by comparison. The seafood in the dish — shrimp, crawfish, salmon and crab — was fine, though not outstanding. The sausage offered a significant back-of-the-tongue spice. My companion and I shared the two dishes (neither of which was outlandishly portioned) and made a point not to over-eat. We took left-overs, and yet still both felt significantly slowed for at least a good hour after finishing, as if both the brain and body



PHOTO BY MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA

**Sweet Basil's Vegetarian Reuben features thinly cut, peppered Tofurkey instead of pastrami.**

were operating at around 60 percent. (In part, I blame that devilishly creamy polenta...)

The lunch menu, however, was much leaner. From it I tried first the Vegetarian Reuben (\$9.95), an idea so seemingly anathema to the original — it exists because of corned beef — I had to know: Was it folly or innovation? Happily, I found it to be the latter. Thinly cut, peppered Tofurkey adequately appropriated the texture of pastrami, and the remainder of the ingredients — lightly toasted wheat bread, sauerkraut, Swiss cheese and a lightly sweet Thousand Island dressing — were spot on. Indeed, unless in the midst of an insatiable craving for red meat, the Vegetarian Reuben is a worthy trade — your gastrointestinal tract will thank you.

As the menu noted, the Italian Panini (\$8.95), is "Simply tomatoes, basil pesto, mozzarella and provolone." Indeed, standard

### If you go

**SWEET BASIL'S**

271 N. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach  
503-436-1539

**RATING: ★ ★ ★ ★**

**HOURS:** Lunch is served from 11:30a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday to Monday. Dinner is served 5 to 9 p.m. Wednesday to Monday.

**PRICE: \$\$** — Entrées hover around \$20, though lighter fare is available.

**SERVICE:** Attentive but structurally quaint

**VEGETARIAN / VEGAN OPTIONS:** Thoughtful and available, though not overwhelming

**DRINKS:** An extensive selection of wine, as well as beer, coffee and tea.

as it was, it sang. It was buttery, oily, full of pesto and balanced by bright tomatoes. (Both sandwiches were served with two or three bites worth of mixed greens, topped with a smidgen of house-made roasted tomato dressing, and both could be made vegan with soy cheese).

Finally I had a salad so familiar there ought to name it for it. On a base of organic greens were cranberries, walnuts, apples and chicken (as well as a few cucumbers and some tomatoes on the side, which had no business being on the plate). With a mango-lime dressing that was equal parts of each, the chicken on the Roasted Chicken and Apple Salad (\$14.50) was perhaps the least appealing ingredient (besides those

stubborn tomatoes). The meat was dry and unseasoned. Overall though, the plate was fresh and filling. It also differed from the menu.

In fact, I found two different menus in Sweet Basil's — the one posted on the window differed ever so slightly from the one on my table. The distinctions were almost meaningless. For instance, on the salad one menu said it came with pecans, another said almonds. I received walnuts. To me this isn't so much carelessness as Sowa's commitment to putting the best and freshest ingredients available that are befitting of the dish.

And that's pretty much Sweet Basil's in a nutshell: Put yourself in Sowa's hands, and occasionally he'll carry you away.