

Cannabis shops in Cannon Beach?

Pot from Page 1A

"I don't think a (marijuana) business could succeed here," Benefield said. "This (opt-out option) gives one more chance to clarify if they really want it ... I think it's going to be on the ballot whether the city does it, or the citizen does it."

Sam Chapman, founding partner of New Economy Consulting, has said he is interested in opening a medical marijuana shop in Cannon Beach.

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Beach. "They're everywhere now and I think it's very realistic that one could be located here and potentially succeed," Kucera said.

Seaside has two licensed medical marijuana dispensaries and plans to allow recreational retail.

"I hate to open up a controversy in the community between those who want it and those who don't," Vetter said.

The marijuana topic is an "emotional" one, Cadwallader said, adding that she was concerned about not allowing marijuana shops in a city with three breweries.

"I feel like there's a big hypocrisy to say it (a marijuana shop) doesn't fit with our community's character or that we're a family resort area and that's who we try to attract," she said. "If you're talking about addictive substances, consistency is an important thing."

At the March City Council meeting, resident Marlene Laws asked the council to take the option of allowing a licensed recreational marijuana shop to the voters as a referendum in the November 2016 election.

"This will not be a cost to the city," she said.

Laws said she is concerned about children's health and safety, especially when it comes to marijuana edibles.

"I know some of you believe that we do not need to vote on the marijuana issue in Cannon Beach because 63 percent of the people vote for it and therefore must want a shop in Cannon Beach," she said. "I disagree with this because I don't believe we can know why people vote the way they do. Maybe Uncle Charlie in Salem takes medical marijuana. Maybe they wanted to stop the marijuana black market or maybe they don't want daughter Mary to have a criminal record. There could be many reasons why people voted to legalize marijuana."

Cannon Beach voters approved Measure 91, allowing recreational sale and possession of small amounts of marijuana, by 63 percent in November 2014. However, the city only licenses businesses which abide by local, state and federal law, which excludes cannabis. Due to this licensing issue, the city has not yet received marijuana dispensary applications, although some have expressed interest, City Recorder Colleen Riggs said.

Activist proud of CB recall petition

'If you don't speak up, you can't complain'

By R.J. Marx
Cannon Beach Gazette

The petition drive to remove three Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District directors was driven by the efforts of Cannon Beach resident Susan Neuwirth, angered by the sudden firing of former Chief Mike Balzer in October. "I never wanted to do this," Neuwirth said. "But at the end of the day, I'm proud of it. Too often people sit around and bitch and moan about local politics. If you don't go to meetings and you don't speak up, you can't complain."

Board of directors President Sharon Clyde, Linda Beck-Sweeney and Garry Smith are named in the recall petition; directors Bob Cerelli and Mark Mekenas were not.

Wednesday to either resign or submit a written statement of justification to the Clerk's Office.

The directors have not yet announced their intentions, and released a statement Friday defending their actions in dismissing the former chief.

"Mike was let go when the majority of the directors, elected by district voters, became concerned about his ability to perform the administrative skills required of the head of a public agency," the directors wrote.

Not political, 'til now

Neuwirth said she had never been "a political person" before. "In fact, I even registered to vote in order to file this petition," she said.

"I didn't know Mike or the people



R.J. MARX/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Susan Neuwirth led a successful petition drive to force a recall election in Cannon Beach.

involved," Neuwirth said. "I talked to people who had been affected by it. The unanimous opinion was the board does not treat volunteers with any respect and they never treated the chief with any respect."

Neuwirth attended a November fire district meeting in which members of the community faced the board. "They told them how angry they were at the board for treating someone of Mike's caliber in such a despicable manner," she said.

Neuwirth launched the recall petition drive in January. "I realized we could sit around and be appalled, or we could exercise our right," she said.

In seeking to gather the minimum 125 signatures required in Clatsop County to force a recall election, Neuwirth said she "never forced, and never coerced" residents to sign the petition. Neuwirth said firefighters and residents alike appreciated Balzer's contributions to the community. "The firefighters told me they'd

rather be in the field with Mike than anyone they've ever been with," Neuwirth said.

Neuwirth said she is "staying away" from a separate lawsuit filed by Balzer seeking his job back and damages.

Balzer filed a civil suit in Clatsop County Court against the fire district, claiming the firing was motivated by "personal animus and did not constitute the good faith sufficient cause under the employment agreement." He seeks more than \$677,000 in damages and relief.

"I stayed away from the lawsuit because they're separate issues," Neuwirth said. "Mike has every right to do what he needs to do, but as far as I'm concerned, this is for the community, I'm doing it for the firefighters. They thank me daily."

Time to step up?

Their decision could create an immediate vacancy or vacancies to fill. If Beck-Sweeney, Smith or Clyde fight the recall, they will face an election challenge.

Will Neuwirth run for the office? "I would hope other people would step up, but if I needed to I would gladly step up," she said. "It is one of the most important boards in this town."

She said she hopes a recall election won't be needed.

"If they resign, they will save the district a lot of money, and if Mike is reinstated, the portion that would affect the district, as far as the lawsuit, would go away," Neuwirth said. "This is not about the money."

If the directors do not resign by Wednesday night, the Clerk's Office anticipates a recall election on April 5 for voters within the fire district.

'Is pot going to make Cannon Beach more attractive to the families that need to move here in order to provide the work force that we need? Easy and available pot is not a good thing for Cannon Beach.'

Steve Hudgik,
pastor at Cannon Beach Bible Church

"We are waiting for the Cannon Beach City Council to make a decision to allow medical marijuana dispensaries," Sam Chapman said. "It sounds like they're split on the issue. I hope they decide that they're bringing new jobs and a new economy ... I'm hoping sooner and later the council will allow dispensaries to exist."

Steve Hudgik, pastor at Cannon Beach Bible Church, said at the March City Council meeting that allowing marijuana shops would adversely affect tourism and city life.

"Is pot going to make Cannon Beach more attractive to the families that need to move here in order to provide the work force that we need?" Hudgik said. "Easy and available pot is not a good thing for Cannon Beach."

City Manager Brant Kucera mentioned the marijuana shop in Rockaway

Festival an opportunity to practice yoga, network

Festival from Page 1A

colorful clothing and bindis at the Sea Ranch Resort. Over lively Indian music, Prashant Kakad taught Bollywood and bhangra style dance moves, with simple names like "water" to designate rolling hand motions, to the all-ages crowd. He also performed with the students who took his optional class that day.

On Sunday morning, Portland yoga teacher and yoga therapist Sarahjoy Marsh taught a course on "The Yoga of Love and Belonging," amid soothing sounds of rain falling outside.

Marsh discussed nourishing our "koshas," which represent the "layers of our human eco-system." It starts with the outermost layer—"anna," associated with physical yoga poses — to the inner layer, "ananda," which loosely translated to "unconditional belonging or love."

"Belonging and love doesn't leave us," Marsh said. "We wander away from it."

Singing or chanting is one way to get closer to "ananda." While playing a harmonium, she led the class in a Sanskrit song that included the lyrics, "May we have luminous outer-comes; may we get pulled away from the darkness."

"We're biological species, but there is more to us," Marsh said. "We have a spiritual imperative to know ourselves and to contribute. We want a sense of larger possibility."

When we decide to be nurturing in relationships, even in stressful work situations, "we start to see other people more tenderly and not burdensomely," Marsh said.

Yoga improves the tone of the vagus nerve, a cranial nerve that extends to the chest and abdomen.

"When the vagus nerve is working, we have more benevolence and compassion, and fewer challenges with the sensory world," she said.

Marsh had the class write down a mantra, then repeat mantra with each inhale and

exhale to "trance the mind out of habit" and foster a state of "nonthought."

One student in the class, Dona Zavislan, superintendent at Washington Corrections Center for Women, plans to start a yoga teacher training for offenders. She also hopes to begin a meditation and yoga training for corrections center's staff to help combat stress.

Stephanie Mines, a Gresham psychologist who helps those who have experienced trauma, signed up for the Cannon Beach Yoga Festival after finishing a

draining and "intense" work period.

"I wanted to find something that would help me detox and ground me," she said. "Yoga connects me to my truth."

Mines was accompanied by her daughter, Rachel Erdman, who said that yoga "helps you manage everything and get back to yourself."

Both mother and daughter said Marsh's workshops were a highlight of the festival for them.

"She zeros in on students and connects with people," said Mines.

Self-publishing made easy

The Tolovana Arts Center announces "How to Publish Your Book with Ease" a two-hour workshop led by Cannon Beach author Gregory E. Zschomler, Saturday, March 26, 1-3 p.m. at the Tolovana Arts Colony, 3779 S. Hemlock, Cannon Beach.

The workshop will cover the ins and outs of self-publishing vs. traditional publishing,

writing, editing, typesetting, cover design and more.

Zschomler, a member of the Northwest Independent Authors Association, is the author of nearly a dozen self-published books. The class fee is \$25. For more information or registration contact gregory.zschomler@gmail.com. <http://www.tolovanaartscolony.org/>

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