

LETTERS

Readers passionate in opinions on recall petition

Do not recall

The firing of Mike Balzer as Cannon Beach fire chief has been in the local news. A fair review of publicly available information (board minutes and Mike's performance evaluation) reveals that Mike brought this dismissal upon himself.

The fire board appointed Mike to chief almost three years ago, after receiving a petition signed by all Cannon Beach firefighters in support of promoting Mike from within (instead of doing an external search). Mike was well known in the community as an excellent firefighter and a great guy; everyone assumed that Mike could successfully grow into the role as the fire district's executive director. Any gaps in his experience would be filled in with training courses and help from other fire chiefs.

It was soon apparent that Mike was not interested in improving his performance in the administrative and communications areas so essential to the role of fire chief. As the board tried to work with Mike to get him up to speed, his resistance to training courses, help from fellow chiefs, board guidance, and even help from his officers only increased.

After 2½ years of working with Mike, a board majority voted to terminate his employment and start the search for a replacement. His dismissal occurred several months after

a negative performance review conducted by the board, a review that included input by five evaluators from other agencies in Clatsop County. In spite of the review's explicit directions for corrective action, Mike made no subsequent effort to change his behavior.

The board could have said that since they liked Mike as a person, they would cover for his poor performance for the remaining time on his contract. But to ignore their fiduciary responsibility and reward incompetence would have been a clear case of cronyism, which always hurts an organization by causing good people to leave, and by jeopardizing financial support from taxpayers and donors.

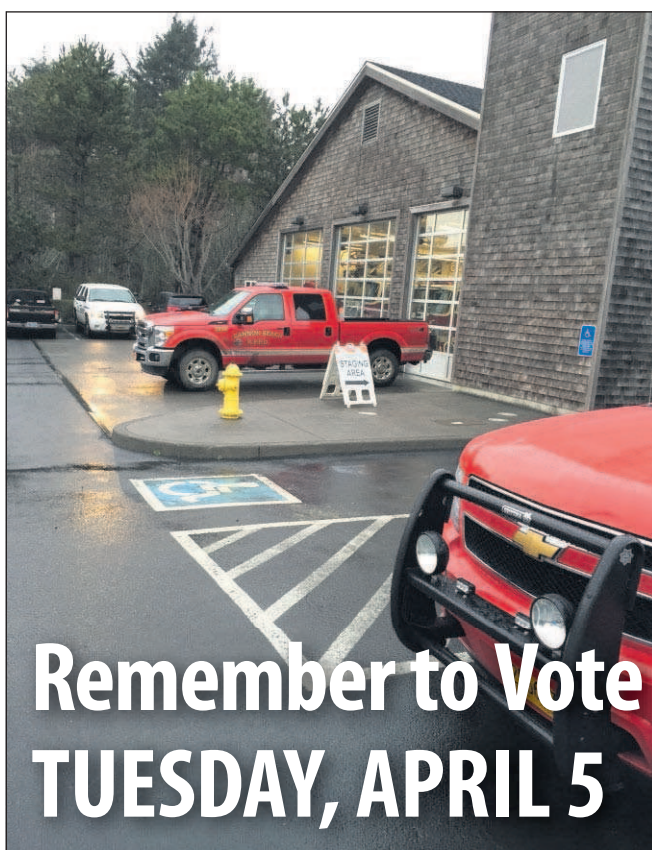
I encourage voters to consider the issues carefully and support competence and professionalism by boards and agency heads in the conduct of the public's business. Please mark no on all three recall questions.

**Jim Harris
Cannon Beach**

Join me in voting 'no'

I'm as sorry as the next person that we lost our fire chief, but the truth is that you don't lose a job like that without due process. Besides, he has a court case pending against the board.

The board members under scrutiny have many decades of experience and training. I wonder if you're aware that



FILE PHOTO

the Arch Cape Fire Station was designed and built by the current board at no additional cost to the taxpayers; no small feat.

But now, our volunteer fire department is required to pay for this special recall vote instead of being paid for by the petitioners. The pending court case could prove to be an additional expense. And, yet, another certain expense would

be years and years of training for new board members.

The fact is we're getting a new fire chief. Nothing's going to change that. Are we really going to saddle him with a board of directors whose voting majority has no experience, no training and a large chip on its shoulders? The words "nose" and "face" spring to mind with a measure of spite thrown in.

Let's remember what's at stake here. These are our first responders and this is a matter of public safety.

I suggest that personal grudges be aired in the courtroom. And if the petitioners honestly believe they can do a better job than our current board, then they should have to prove that to us in a general election.

Please join me in voting "no" on the recall.

**Valoree Gift
Cannon Beach**

Board violated its duty

In recent newspaper articles and letters to the editor, the board of directors of the Cannon Beach RFPD has repeatedly defended the firing of the chief as a matter of their fiduciary responsibility to the community.

Fiduciary responsibility is taking care of another's matters, in this case our public safety. It requires trust, honesty and good faith. The board has violated its fiduciary responsibility to Mike Balzer by firing him without adequate cause. In doing so, they've also violated their fiduciary responsibility to the community by exposing it

to thousands of dollars of extra expense and a wrongful termination lawsuit. Board members continue to dodge their responsibility by continuing their assault on Balzer and his supporters in print and social media.

Many of the letters and articles are based on misinformation, mistruths and plain untruths. One byline in particular, features Balzer's picture and states the chief simply did not do his job. That's rubbish. Over the past years, Cannon Beach residents have all observed Balzer doing what he was hired for, to protect our community, even as he was being assigned a myriad of extra tasks by board members without the necessary support to complete them. It is an interesting side note that the board in its March meeting voted to fund a matching grant from the SDAO to hire an intern to assist the chief with his administrative duties.

Cannon Beach voters recently received a mailer signed by the three members facing recall. In it they claim to have received only six letters from

See Letters, Page 6A

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

VOTE YES

CBRFD RECALL

ROBERT CAIN LD,
45 Years of Experience

TWO LOCATIONS
SEASIDE & HILLSBORO

740 Ave H • Ste 2 • Seaside
232 NE Lincoln • Ste B • Hillsboro

FREE CONSULTATION

- Dentures for all ages, New, Partials and Custom Dentures
- Dentures for implants
- Relines & Repairs
- Denture repairs done same day!
- Personal service and attention to detail

Open Wednesday and Friday • 9-4:30 • 503-738-7710

WILBEN HOUSE PUB
CANNON BEACH, OR

SERVING LUNCH & DINNER
OPEN AT 11:30
Tuesday's Open at 4pm

Delightful Beer
Garden • Ocean View Deck
Pool Tables • Darts
Full Bar (including Bill's Tavern brews) but that's not all...

Smoked Pork Ribs • Steak • Seafood and much, much more!

Located in SOUTH Cannon Beach
3301 S. Hemlock St. • Tolovana Park
503.436.1130 • Minors Welcome

ANSWERS ON:
Efficiency

"YES, YOU CAN INSULATE YOURSELF FROM HIGHER ENERGY BILLS."

- Tom, Homeowner

A well-insulated home is a more energy-efficient home. It's also a home that feels cozy in the winter, cooler in the summer and saves you money all year long. And with cash incentives, you can add insulation to your home and save energy for years to come. Learn more home energy efficiency tips at bewattsmart.com.

PACIFIC POWER
Let's turn the answers on.

Windermere REAL ESTATE
Windermere Stellar
LUXURY PORTFOLIO
INTERNATIONAL

<p>NEW LISTING OCEAN FRONT COTTAGE 4080 Pacific Ave, Cannon Beach Walking into this ocean front vintage cottage is like walking into a painting that frames the ocean, Haystack Rock, Tillamook Light-house, Tillamook Head & Silver Point. CMLS#16-185 \$2,500,000 Karen Meili 503-440-5806</p>	<p>NEW LISTING HILLTOP LOCATION, VIEWS GALORE 171 1st St, Cannon Beach Stroll to the beach, dining, shopping & galleries from this designer furnished 4bd, 4ba home. Recently remodeled, gourmet kitchen. Cathedral ceilings. FOR DETAILS CALL 1-800-784-9541 EXT 509 CMLS#16-204 \$995,000 Jackie Weber 503-440-2331</p>	<p>NEW LISTING GRACE AND ELEGANCE 8720 Braeridge Dr, Manzanita Renew your spirit watching the waves shimmer from the five decks or prepare dinner in the chef's kitchen, enjoy sweeping sea views from this 3 bd, 3 ba magnificent home. CMLS#16-235 \$950,000 Kate Merrell 503-739-2324</p>
<p>NEW LISTING WHITEWATER OCEAN VIEWS 82624 Elkwood Mountain Rd, Cannon Beach Located high above Cannon Beach, southern light fills this 3 bd, 2.5 bd home that is private and wooded on a 2.64 acre estate. Includes charming guest house & garage/workshop. CMLS#16-256 \$865,000 Karen Meili 503-440-5806</p>	<p>NEW LISTING FOREVER VIEW 15710 Oceanview Ave, Rockaway Beach Essentially ocean front with only a treed city park between house & beach! FOR DETAILS CALL 1-800-784-9541 EXT 876 CMLS#16-169 \$799,900 Jackie Weber 503-440-2331</p>	<p>NEW PRICE ELEGANT AND WHIMSICAL 131 W Jackson, Cannon Beach This light and colorful home has been taken down to exterior walls & rebuilt by Coaster Construction. Covered patio w/outdoor fireplace, shower, fenced yard, storage-garage. CMLS#15-1387 \$695,000 Karen Meili 503-440-5806</p>
<p>NEW LISTING KICK BACK AND ENJOY THE VIEW 3748 Coho Place, Cannon Beach Hear and see the waves from the expansive deck from this quiet south end location with just a short walk to the beach. FOR DETAILS CALL 1-800-784-9541 EXT 711 CMLS#16-299 \$499,900 Jackie Weber 503-440-2331</p>	<p>NEW LISTING LUXURIOUS DOWNTOWN LIVING 123 Hemlock #206, Cannon Beach Just two blocks to the ocean, this upper floor 2 bd, 2 ba condo sits above a gallery & shops with restaurants all around. Newly constructed in 2008 facing secluded mountain & trees. CMLS#16-315 \$475,000 Karen Meili 503-440-5806</p>	<p>NEW LISTING A DREAM BEACH HOME VISION VL Pacific, Cannon Beach Building site directly in front of Haystack Rock with sweeping, unparalleled views of the sea's horizon. Home plans available or start your own canvas. CMLS#16-267 \$369,000 Kate Merrell 503-739-2324</p>
<p>NEW PRICE BEAUTIFULLY APPOINTED 3400 S Hemlock #382/332, Cannon Beach You can have it all. Ocean front living without the maintenance or worry. Use your units or let them make money! CMLS#15-327 \$339,000 Tina Chapman 503-440-9957</p>	<p>NEW LISTING NEAH-KAH-NIE MEADOW VIEW LOT Mariners Trail #2, NeahKahNie Spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean & beaches of Manzanita and south. Gated, protective CC&Rs, all utilities installed, paved roads in an area of upscale homes. CMLS#16-309 \$335,000 Chuck Overton 503-440-2653</p>	<p>NEW LISTING OWN A PIECE OF HOMESTEADING HISTORY VL Hwy 101, Cannon Beach Magnificent 5-acre parcel has been in the family for generations. Near the spectacular, unspoiled Arcadia Beach's tranquil beauty. CMLS#15-1312 \$265,000 Kate Merrell 503-739-2324 Darel Grothaus 503-717-2814</p>

CANNON BEACH OFFICE
255 N. Hemlock, Ste. B1 • Cannon Beach, OR 97110
800/676-1176 • 503/436-1027

GEARHART OFFICE
588 Pacific Way • Gearhart, OR 97138
800/275-7773 • 503/738-9522

Serving the Entire North Oregon Coast • www.WindermereOregonCoast.com