



MEMORIAL DAY



LYRA FONTAINE/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

The Color Guard carried flags across the Fir Street Bridge in remembrance of veterans at the American Legion's Memorial Day ceremony.

'LIBERTY IS NOT FREE'

In Cannon Beach, a day of gratitude and remembrance

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

Flowers in hand, families and veterans gathered on Fir Street Bridge Monday to remember those who lost their lives serving the country. The American Legion Post 168 has organized a Memorial Day ceremony in Cannon Beach since the 1970s. "Today is a time to pause and reflect on just how much we owe others," Post Commander Dan O'Reilly told the crowd. "Liberty is not free. Our sons and daughters have answered the call again and again. They have done this without regard for sex, race or religion. We are the melting pot. This is what makes us strong. Many have given their all ... for the freedoms we enjoy."

This price, he added, has been paid in all corners of the world. "We must be watchful that our leaders never commit our valuable resources to a cause that's not necessary, because again, freedom is not free," O'Reilly said. "The playing of taps tells those who have preceded us to rest, for their day is done. Rest in peace, my brothers and sisters. We have the watch. We have your legacy."

He ended his oration with the U.S. Marine Corps motto "Semper fidelis," or "Always faithful."

Cannon Beach Community Church pastor David Robinson led a prayer honoring fallen veterans. "May they rest in peace and may your perpetual light shine upon them," Robinson said.

Robinson issued a plea for justice for the oppressed and peace for all peoples so military sacrifice will not have been in vain.



Cannon Beach residents and visitors remember loved ones who served in the U.S. armed forces by dropping flowers into Ecola Creek.

"And may we never fail to remember the awesome cost of the freedom, which we enjoy here on this bridge and in this fine city," Robinson said.

While taps were played, O'Reilly and those who served the country, whether retired or on active duty, raised their hands in salute. Others in the crowd placed their hands over their hearts.

Following the bugle call, families stepped forward to toss flowers into Ecola Creek from the Fir Street Bridge to remember loved ones who died in service.

Survey results provide insight for city goals

Council, staff to focus on housing, safety needs

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

During two full days of strategic planning sessions, 15 Cannon Beach city councilors and staff considered major community issues, from parking to short-term rentals, before coming to a consensus on city priorities for the next five years.

Results from the recent citizen survey, which received a 40 percent response from residents, guided the May 25 and 26 discussions. Of those respondents, 4 percent were second homeowners.

After analyzing survey results and the consultant's past interviews with councilors and staff, the group identified five priorities: affordable housing, infrastructure planning, emergency management, relationship with the community and effective government.

"This allows me to focus on specific goals and allows us to be held accountable for achieving these results," City Manager Brant Kucera said. Consultant Marv Weidner said a strategic plan is "a contract with the community" and told the room to set "measurable, achievable" goals for each priority.

The public could attend but not participate. The plan will be adopted at the July council meeting.

Affordable housing

The city will aim to add 25 units of affordable housing for various household sizes by 2018, and 25 more units by 2020.

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Cannon Beach budget approved by committee

Capital projects, utility increases and potential school purchase passed

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

The city plans to rehabilitate the Fir Street Bridge this year but, without receiving a state grant, will not budget money to build a tsunami-proof pedestrian bridge. This was one of several changes the Cannon Beach Budget Committee initiated as they approved the 2016-17 budget May 23. The City Council will conduct public hearings on the approved budget June 14.

At \$16.18 million, the budget is about \$3.6 million less than what was proposed.

The budget reflects costs of projects prioritized by the council as well as deferred maintenance and planning, City Manager Brant Kucera wrote in a May 18 budget committee message.

In approving the modified budget, committee members said they were concerned about the originally proposed 31 percent increase from the budget of \$14.6 million this fiscal year.

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Environmental advocate steps up at the Rock

New volunteer coordinator protects whales

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

In 2015, Frances Holtman was among crew members detained for intervening during the slaughter of pilot whales in the Faroe Islands.

That incident is behind her, but Holtman's dedication to environmental conservation continues in Cannon Beach as the Haystack Rock Awareness Program's new volunteer coordinator. She began working with the program as a staff interpreter in February.

On a bright May morning, Holtman, 25, awaited a group of local elementary school students to arrive for a field trip.

Holtman said ocean ecosystems provide air for every second breath we take.

"The oceans are an intricate ecosystem that we rely upon to survive," she said. "It's really fulfilling to be able to address that."

Holtman noted that the Haystack Rock Awareness Program has an educational program open to students of all ages that regularly sees students from across the state.

"I think this is an important part of making a positive impact," she said. "A lot of adults have been telling me that one of the things they remember the most from when they were a kid is coming out on field trips to Haystack Rock. And I know myself, when I was a kid, going on field trips really stand out for me."

Holtman emphasized the importance of both year-round and one-time



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Frances Holtman is the new volunteer coordinator for the Haystack Rock Awareness Program.

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