

Sabra J’s Attic to close its doors after 18 years

Owner looks back on shop’s history

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

In December, the quaint shop that has welcomed people to the north end of Cannon Beach for 18 years will close its doors.

Sabra J’s Attic is known for antiques, home decor, baby wear, jewelry, and unique gifts like the well-loved Gurgle pot, a pitcher that makes a whimsical gurgling sound.

After working as a florist, wedding coordinator and more, owner Diane Ortezt started Sabra J’s at age 58 as a first-time business owner.

“It’s been an absolute adventure,” she said. “A lot of people think that they’re maybe too old to start their dream. If you have it in your heart that you want to serve people, it’s never too late.”

The store is named after Diane’s great-grandmother. Though she was nervous about starting a business “with no experience, just my faith,” Diane successfully ran the shop, which included a full coffee bar.

“People always commented when they came in that they just felt the peace,” Ortez said. “No matter how tired I was or what was going on, whenever I would go in and walk into that shop it would feel like I was in a different, wonderful place.”

Diane would travel to Canada, San Francisco and Las Vegas to hunt for antiques. After her husband Richard’s head injury, Diane closed the coffee bar to focus on caregiving and the shop. Once Richard recovered, he worked at the shop one day — and successfully sold 42 Gurgle pots to one customer.

Richard, who formerly worked in sales, became Diane’s “best salesperson” and the “Gurgle pot king.” He sings love songs to couples that visit the store.

“When they leave, they’re holding hands,” Diane said.

If Richard sees someone with a “wonderful, lit smile” or someone who isn’t



Sabra J’s Attic owner Diane Ortezt and her husband Richard celebrated their 60th anniversary this year. Ortez is closing the store after 18 years in December.

smiling much, he will give out a “smile award,” which he designed after his cancer diagnosis.

“It’s just the kind of person he is,” Diane said. “Instead of being down, he wants to tell jokes and do anything he can to make somebody happy.”

Throughout the years, the Ortezes have developed close relationships with longtime customers and vendors, which Diane said she will miss.

“That many years, you just build up relationships with everyone,” she said. “We’ve made the most amazing friends that we’ll always be in contact with. It’s kind of like your family, especially when you don’t have family real close.”

Diane said Cannon Beach’s hospitable small town community keeps people coming back.

“I have a lot of people who come in for hugs and to see how we are or report they have a new grandchild,” she said. “They’re not coming in to buy and they know that’s not what I’m expecting.”

Since the decision to close the shop

was unexpected, Diane said it will be difficult, “like skidding to a stop.” She is recovering after breaking her wrists in a recent accident.

“Sometimes faith is the only thing that keeps you going,” she said. “I’m excited about the next adventure.”

Before relocating to its current location at 273 Beaver St., Sabra J’s was located on the Beaver Street corner for 16 years. The shop was featured in publications like Sunset magazine.

The Ortezes sold the building — which they remodeled to look like a general store from the movie “Sarah, Plain and Tall” — to Harding Trading Co. in 2014.

Sabra J’s will transition into a website after the brick-and-mortar shop closes. They may lease the building.

Closing the shop will give Diane time to socialize, which she hasn’t had much time for in the midst of ordering products, decorating and other myriad responsibilities that come with running a shop.

“I’m looking forward to a few lunches,” she laughed.



Ellen Jensen Emily Estrada Katherine Lacaze

Performance puts new spin on Shakespeare

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

A performance by three local thespians at the Coaster Theatre offers a fresh take on Shakespeare classics like “Romeo and Juliet” and “Hamlet.”

Starting this weekend, Seaside residents Emily Estrada, Ellen Jensen and Katherine Lacaze will perform the comedic play “The Completed Works of William Shakespeare (abridged),” written by Adam Long, Daniel Singer and Jess Winfield. The trio produced, designed and directed the play, working off a script that includes modern-day references, “Titus Andronicus” portrayed as a cooking show and more.

“Whether people like or loathe Shakespeare, they should come,” Lacaze said. “It is both a satirization of Shakespeare as well as an appreciation for the breadth and depth of his work. They’ll get to laugh at him and also appreciate him.”

The three actresses will play themselves and take on various roles — for example, Lacaze plays Romeo, Polonius and Caesar.

The trio decided to produce and perform the play while acting in the spring Coaster Theatre production “The Apple Tree.” They would rehearse late evenings, three to four times a week.

“I think because of the effort we’ve all put into it, we’re all getting a larger sense of pride from the production, just knowing that we’ve done it all ourselves,” Lacaze said. “There have been small mo-

ments that meant a lot to us, like getting props or doing it in the theater for the first time.”

The play includes 37 of Shakespeare’s works.

“We rap ‘Othello’ which is going to be interesting, and hopefully enjoyable, for people to watch,” Lacaze said. “None of us have much rapping or beatboxing experience.”

The script encourages improvisation and ad-libbing. “You have to respond to how the audience is behaving as opposed to just skipping to the script,” Lacaze said. Because of the participation component, they hope for large audiences.

For Lacaze, acting is a chance to strengthen community spirit.

“You’re creating something out of nothing,” she said. “A play is such an abstract concept but when you put it all together, it’s so enjoyable for both the actors and actresses and also the audience viewing it.”

The three women bring 45 collective years of theater experience, including local performances. Estrada studied theater production in college, Jensen has appeared in various Coaster Theatre productions and Lacaze has long written and acted in plays.

“Doing it with your two best friends makes a difference,” Lacaze said. “I think onstage that chemistry will really come through.”

The play will be performed Nov. 5 at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 6 at 2:30 p.m. and Nov. 12 at 7:30 p.m. Admission and refreshments are free.

Creative Coast presents Women’s Only painting workshops Nov. 11

Creative Coast, a new program of Cannon Beach Arts Association, presents Women Only Weekend painting workshops with two classes Friday, Nov. 11, led by the artist Blue Bond.

In the first workshop from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. brunch will be served along with complementary mimosas, as participants are led through the creation of acrylic painting of a festive grouping of pumpkins. In the afternoon class from 4 to 6 p.m. Bond guides the group through the re-creation of beautiful and delicate cherry blossoms in acrylic. Complementary hors d’oeuvres and wine will be provided.

Both sessions are to be held at the Creative Coast project space in Sandpiper Square and are limited to 14

participants. For further information and reservations visits cannonbeacharts.org or call 503-436-4426.



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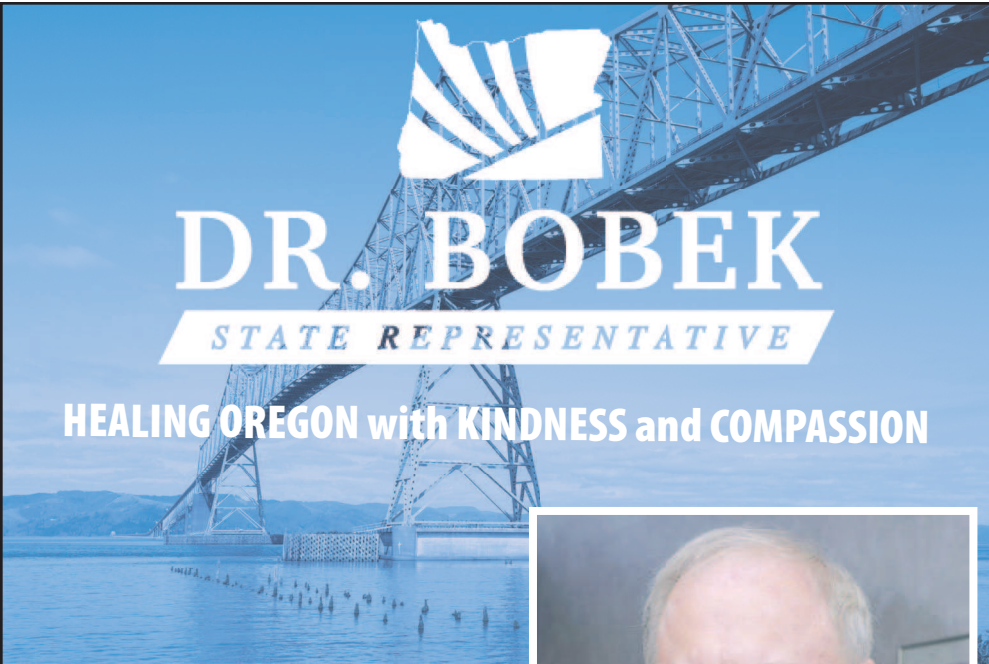
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