



2016 the Year in Review



Clockwise, from top left: A tornado ripped through Manzanita in the fall, causing damage to buildings in a wide downtown swath; Boneyard Ridge was acquired by the North Coast Land Conservancy; Doug Dougherty and Tom Horning at the site of a new Seaside High School campus; Jessica Smith appears in court before pleading guilty to aggravated murder and attempted aggravated murder of her children; A whale washed up ashore before finally settling at Oswald West State Park.



DANNY MILLER/EO MEDIA GROUP

Changes that marked an eventful year

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

From major conservation achievements to the return of the namesake cannon, below are some of the top stories from 2016.

In the past year, Cannon Beach also mourned the death of beloved resident John Fraser, remained unscathed from a tornado that caused major damage in Manzanita, approved a \$99.7 million bond to relocate Seaside School District schools outside of the tsunami zone, and witnessed a humpback whale washing ashore — twice.

Jessica Smith murder trial ends

In August, Jessica Smith was sentenced to life in prison for drowning her toddler, Isabella, and slashing her teenager, Alana, at the Cannon Beach Surfand Resort in July 2014. The Vancouver, Washington woman pleaded guilty and will serve a minimum of 40 years in prison for aggravated murder and attempted aggravated murder.

The murder rattled Cannon Beach, which had not had a homicide for almost 50 years. Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn and former Assistant Fire Chief Frank Swedenborg were the first to respond to the Surfand Resort room.

Affordable housing plan adopted

In Cannon Beach, a plan to create more housing for year-round employees is underway. The City Council adopted the city's affordable housing task force report in December. The plan recommends placing park model homes

within the city-owned RV Resort and municipal code changes — proposals that will require future public hearings. Some residents near the RV Resort expressed concerns.

Changes at City Hall

A citizen initiative to prohibit retail marijuana shops in Cannon Beach was narrowly defeated in November. The city will be able to approve recreational marijuana business licenses on Jan. 6.

Two fresh faces were elected to the City Council, former Cannon Beach Gazette editor Nancy McCarthy and previous Planning Commission Chair Brandon Ogilvie. Melissa Cadwallader and Wendy Higgins finished their terms.

In August, the City Council adopted the city's first strategic plan. The city's top focus is affordable housing, with goals that include adding 25 units by 2018. Officials also prioritized infrastructure planning and maintenance, emergency management, relationship with the community and effective government. While councilors and staff said the plan provides direction and city accountability, some residents said the plan did not involve sufficient community input.

Controversial development plan approved

After more than a year of facing opposition from a 70-member citizens group and denials

by the Planning Commission, Cannon Beach property owner Jeff Nicholson earned final conditional approval in March from the City Council for his four-lot residential development plan on Laurel Street. Ten residents challenged the council's decision by filing an appeal with the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals, but the board denied that the final plan lacked sufficient detail, veered from the approved preliminary plan and lacked a development schedule.

NCLC celebrates 30th anniversary, acquires connecting lands

The North Coast Land Conservancy celebrated 30 years of conserving the Oregon coastal landscape in August.

In July, after about five years of work by staff and volunteers, the conservancy acquired the 340-acre Boneyard Ridge on Tillamook Head for \$1.3 million, linking 3,500 acres of conserved areas. The conservancy plans to turn the former commercial tree farm into a high-functioning temperate rainforest.

In November, the land trust took the first steps toward purchasing 3,300 acres of timberland at Onion Peak. The acquisition would be the largest private land preservation deal in western Oregon. The conservancy will work to raise funds for the purchase, which will cost about \$10 million over five years.

Children's center closes, academy approved

In April, the Cannon Beach Children's Center closed after 39 years due to declining enrollment and financial troubles.

Despite not opening this fall as planned, due to the district withdrawing conditional support in March, the Cannon Beach Academy persevered and is slated to open in fall 2017. The academy received unconditional approval by the Seaside School District in October. In early 2017, the academy will begin the process of hiring staff and administrators, and enrollment could open in March.

Cannon returns to town

The eponymous cannon returned to the Cannon Beach History Center and Museum after four years of being restored in Texas, then stored at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. The iron cannon and capstan are thought to be from the decking of the USS Shark, a U.S. naval schooner that went down in the Columbia River in 1846.



FILE PHOTO

Elaine Trucke and Matt Powers unveil the historic capstan, which accompanies the cannon that gives Cannon Beach its name.

LOTS

OF PLACES YOU CAN PICK UP A COMPLIMENTARY COPY OF THE

GAZETTE

CANNON BEACH

<p>CANNON BEACH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannon Beach Bakery Cannon Beach Book Company Cannon Beach Beach Store Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce Cannon Beach City Hall Cannon Beach Conference Center Cannon Beach Family Market Cannon Beach Historical Center Cannon Beach Hotel Cannon Beach Liquor Store Cannon Beach Property Management Cannon Beach RV Resort Cannon Beach Vacation Rentals Cascade Sotheby's Realty Duane Johnson Real Estate Ecola Creek Lodge EVOO Hallmark Inns & Resorts Inn at Cannon Beach Inn at Haystack Rock Mariner Market Martin Hospitality Mo's Restaurant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picnic Basket Pig 'N Pancake Purple Moon/Morris' Fireside Restaurant RE/MAX Coastal Advantage Sea Ranch RV Park Sea Sprite at Haystack Rock Sea Sprite on the Estuary Surfcrest Market Sweet Basil's Cafe & The Wine Bar The Land's End Motel The Ocean Lodge The Stephanie Inn The Waves Motel Tolovana Inn US Bank/La Luna Loca Windermere Stellar Real Estate <p>SEASIDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providence Seaside Hospital Rite Aid Safeway Seaside Outlet Center Seaside Signal/Cannon Beach Gazette Office <p>GEARHART</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Windermere Stellar Real Estate
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