

Volunteer fights fires for the love of it

Firefighter says it's a way to 'give back to the community'

By Lyra Fontaine
Cannon Beach Gazette

When the historic Oswald West log cabin burned in 1991 due to an act of arson, JoAnne Cremer was one of the firefighters on the scene battling the blaze for hours.

It was one of the most memorable moments in Cremer's 32 years as a Cannon Beach volunteer firefighter.

"It was the night of my birthday," she said. "We were there until late in the evening or early morning. It was the hottest fire I have ever fought in my life because of the logs ... We all worked really hard that night."

Cremer was recently featured as Cannon Beach Fire and Rescue firefighter of the month, recognized for her longtime commitment and for being "probably the most positive person with one of the best smiles."

Cremer decided to join the fire district after living in Cannon Beach for several years and getting to know local firefighters.

"I just decided it was a way I could give back to the community," she said.

Cremer said the "love of it" motivates her to continue firefighting.

"This is like my other job — my unpaid job," she said. "Once you get into an organization like this and become so close with everybody, it's like having a second family. For some of us, it's our first family. I think that's why I continue it, just the love of it and wanting to continue to help people, to try and make people's lives easier."

"Sometimes you have calls that aren't all roses," she added.

Training

Cremer has been the Cannon Beach Fire and Rescue safety officer for seven years. She oversees the scene at car accidents, fires or medical calls to ensure volunteers are wearing personal protective equipment and heads a safety committee, discussing policies each month.

Volunteer firefighters participate in regular Wednesday trainings. "Sometimes the drills are really exciting," Cremer said.

Trainings might involve "burn to learn," in which people donate their old homes or motor vehicles for the team of volunteers to burn for a period of time. These drills allow volunteers to gain experience with handling actual fires.



LYRA FONTAINE/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

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JoAnne Cremer

"We might set up a smoke machine and a 'body' in there that we might have to find to keep us in touch with what could honestly happen in a real fire," Cremer said. "We have mock motor vehicle accidents, and sometimes in the summer we have a mock rescue in the ocean where we deploy our Jet Skis."

Cremer holds certifications in fire fighter II, apparatus operator, emergency medical responder and water rescue technician. Cannon Beach volunteer firefighters have access to courses that provide continued education, she said.

Cremer was also a Cannon Beach lifeguard for 25 years, more than 15 years full time. Though she remembers some serious rescues, Cremer also recalls the camaraderie among her fellow lifeguards. "It was wonderful," she said. "You're paid to be at the beach."

Outdoor adventurer

For 21 years, Cremer has worked at the same landscaping company, where she enjoys "being able to beautify things." She likes walking away from a yard

and thinking, "Wow, that looks so good." "I love working outside, even in the rain," she added.

Cremer has also fished commercially for sockeye salmon in Alaska's Bristol Bay, taught in the experimental education unit at the University of Washington and taught preschool in Cannon Beach — "when it was down by the kite shop."

Cremer grew up in Portland and moved to Cannon Beach in 1980.

"I always wanted to live at the coast, even as a little kid," she said. She appreciates "the close-knit community and the amazing beauty of the beach and our surroundings."

In her spare time, Cremer enjoys taking her active dog, Sailor, on walks, hiking, mountain biking and cycling.

An avid cyclist, Cremer often bikes to Astoria and around Fort Stevens. She has also started century riding — biking 100 miles.

"You start at a certain time and you pedal 100 miles," Cremer said. "You're out there and it's like, 'Yep, I'm doing this.'"

Christmas giving

Christmas from Page 1A

The American Legion helps deliver gifts that kids wish for from the "Giving Tree" at U.S. Bank, containing cards with items that people in the community can purchase.

Maddy Wrege, 10, was volunteering for the fourth year.

"These are the most toys we've had for awhile," she said. "I like delivering because I like seeing the people's expressions."

By Friday, the presents were delivered and volunteers, including police officers and firefighters, helped load and deliver food boxes to low-income apartments at Elk Creek Terrace and Shorewood Apartments and other Cannon Beach households.

Since 1977, American Legion Vice Commander Don Boehm has organized the program and shopped for food. The program began when someone donated \$5,000 for Christmas baskets.

"We've carried that on," Boehm said. "We're here for the community. We wish to thank all the people who donate and make it known that we appreciate their support."

Volunteers Stacie Gilligan and Heidi Lent have coordinated the food baskets for about seven years.

"It takes us about a week to get it done," Lent said. "It's very necessary. The American Legion is the only service organization in Cannon Beach, so it felt natural for them to take this on."

Some items are donated by community members, food banks or local businesses like Bruce's Candy Kitchen. The rest is purchased by the post's charitable account, which comes from donations and proceeds from fundraisers. It cost about \$3,500 to \$4,000 to fill the food baskets, Gilligan said.

Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn — assisted



CANNON BEACH FIRE AND RESCUE

Cannon Beach Police Officer Matthew Nunnally and firefighter Brian Smith share holiday cheer while volunteering at the American Legion Christmas Basket program.

by 12-year-old son Jackson — said the officers help with the program each year.

"It's such a good partnership," Schermerhorn said. "This is one of those things that officers love to do, and it's great for people to see a different side of the police officers. We're actually doing what we want to do, which is help people, and we appreciate the legion for keeping us involved."

Siblings Silvia and Christian Avila volunteered for the Christmas basket program with their mother, Miriam Luna.

"I have time and I want to help," Christian said. "I've always lived in Elk Creek so I've experienced this from the other perspective ... I feel like we kind of took it for granted. This doesn't happen everywhere else. I think it's a sigh of relief for the parents. They will buy one or two things for each child, but having this much more to bulk up what's under the Christmas tree really helps."

A volunteer firefighter, Silvia said she decided to volunteer because she enjoys helping others.

"It's what we do in the fire department," she said, "and Christmas is my favorite holiday."

MUNICIPAL MEMO

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION
MAYOR: Sam Steidel
COUNCILORS: Wendy Higgins, Melissa Cadwallader, Mike Benefield & George Vetter
CITY MANAGER: Brant Kucera

MEETINGS JANUARY 2017

3	City Council Regular Meeting	7:00 p.m.
10	City Council Work Session	5:30 p.m.
19	Design Review Board	6:00 p.m.
26	Planning Commission	6:00 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING, December 6, 2016

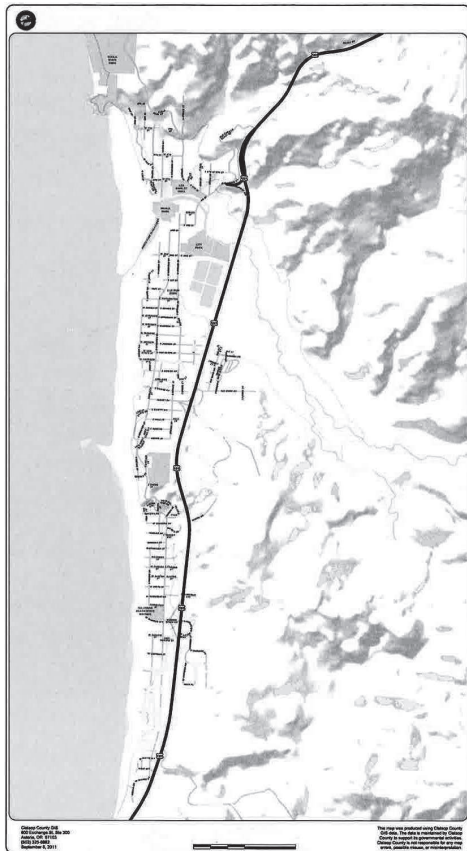
- Adopted Ordinance 16-06, Amending Business License Ordinance to allow Marijuana Businesses in Cannon Beach;
- Adopted Ordinance 16-07, Repealing Chapter 9.18 of the Municipal Code which Imposed a Moratorium on Medical Marijuana Dispensaries;
- Adopted Resolution 16-12, for the Purpose of Accepting the Final Official Canvass of Votes from the Clatsop County Clerk of the November 8, 2016 General Election;
- Adopted the Affordable Housing Report submitted by the Affordable Housing Task Force;
- Adopted the 2016 Employee Handbook;
- Appointed Karolyn Adanson to serve a second term on the Emergency Preparedness Committee; appointed Robin Risley to serve a second term on Parks and Community Services Committee; Appointed Patrick Lathrop to his first term on the Parks and Community Services Committee and reappointed Tom Drumheller to the Tourism and Arts Commission;
- Approved the revised process and evaluation form for the City Manager position.

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION, December 13, 2016

- Haystack Rock Awareness Project (HRAP) Coordinator Melissa Keyser presented the 2016 annual report for HRAP;
- Discussed the Linn County class action lawsuit;
- City Manager Brant Kucera presented an update on the Strategic Plan goals.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD - The Design Review Board meeting November 17, 2016 was cancelled. At their December 15, 2016 meeting the Design Review Board discussed:

FS 16-04, for Wayfarer Restaurant, Located at 1190 Pacific Drive. The applicant, Dave Norstedt, was seeking approval for two freestanding signs for the Wayfarer Restaurant. The signs will replace two existing signs previously approved. **Approved**



PLANNING COMMISSION

- At their November 22, 2016, meeting the Planning Commission discussed:
V 16-06, Vonada Variance Application to Allow an Existing Entry Deck to Remain in the Front-yard Setback to Facilitate Placement of a New Access Ramp at 524 N Ash. **Approved**
P 16-02, Cannon Beach Holdings LLC, Partition Request for 1371 S Hemlock, Location of Pelican Pub. **Approved**

Discussed the annual parking management plan review. At their December 22, 2016 meeting the Planning Commission discussed:
CU 16-05, Cannon Beach Academy request for a conditional use permit to allow a temporary location for Cannon Beach Academy Charter School at 171 Sunset. The applicant was previously approved for a condition use permit (CU 15-02) which has expired.

CP 16-01, City of Cannon Beach request for Zoning Ordinance text amendment, specifically, the amendment of tree removal ordinance, chapter 17.70, Tree Removal. Discussed the annual parking management plan review.

Of Interest...

- The Cannon Beach **Recycle Center** is open Tuesday - Sunday, 8am - 4pm for residential and commercial use;
- City Hall will be closed Monday January 2, 2017 in observance of the New Year Holiday.
- City Hall will be closed Monday January 16, 2017 in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr Holiday.

Haystack Rock Awareness Program's Wish List 2017

Education:
Acorn Naturalist (www.acornnaturalists.com): Marine Algae Printing Kit QTY 1 #t-22219 - \$61.95; Fish Printing - QTY 3 Sea Star Replica #fp-9990 \$12.95 per, QTY 2 Flounder Replica #fp-9996 \$19.95 per, QTY 1 Salmon Replica #fp-14028 \$19.95 per; Bird Track Mold Kit - QTY 1 #mo-24439 \$94.95
Nature-Watch (www.nature-watch.com): Animal Track Molds QTY 1 #248z \$133.20, Peregrine Falcon Puppet QTY 1 #431c \$39.99
Beach - Volunteers
Amazon (www.amazon.com): Optics: Vortex Diamondback 10x42 binoculars QTY 6 \$199.99 per; Clothing: Wantdo Unisex Outdoors Hooded Waterproof Vest Red QTY 10 \$29.86 per various sizes
Englund Marine in Astoria or www.englundmarine.com: Muck Wetland Field Boots QTY 5 \$128.95 per various sizes
We are in search of beach volunteers for the 2017 season. Please contact: Lisa Habecker, Education & Volunteer Coordinator 503.436.8064, habecker@ci.cannon-beach.or.us

NOTICE OF VACANCIES CITY COMMISSIONS, BOARDS & COMMITTEES

The City of Cannon Beach is seeking applications for the following vacancies:

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE: THREE (3) vacancies to fill four-year terms. The EPREP Committee meets regularly for the purpose of providing evacuation planning and public education regarding emergency preparedness. The committee is comprised of six at-large community members. The Emergency Preparedness Committee normally holds its regular meetings on the last Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m. and may schedule work sessions as needed.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: TWO (2) vacancies to fill four-year terms. One vacancy is open immediately, one begins January 1, 2017. The primary responsibility of the Public Works Committee is to review all public works projects and make recommendations to City Council. The Public Works Committee holds its regular meeting on the third Tuesday of each month at 9:00 a.m.

To be eligible to serve on a City committee, applicants must have resided within the city or its urban growth boundary during the one year immediately preceding appointment; or at the time of appointment, shall have owned real property located within the city or its urban growth boundary for at least one year immediately preceding appointment. Applications are available at City Hall, 163 E. Gower Street, Cannon Beach, by email addressed to riggs@ci.cannon-beach.or.us, or on-line at www.ci.cannon-beach.or.us. For consideration at the February 7, 2017 City Council meeting, applications must be returned to Colleen Riggs, Assistant City Manager, Cannon Beach City Hall, at P.O. Box 368, Cannon Beach, OR 97110 by 4:00 p.m., Monday January 30, 2017. Late applications will not be accepted. For more information, please contact Colleen Riggs by email or phone at (503) 436-8052.

Brandon Ogilvie and Nancy McCarthy

will be sworn in to serve on the City of Cannon Beach City Council at the January 3, 2017 City Council Meeting.