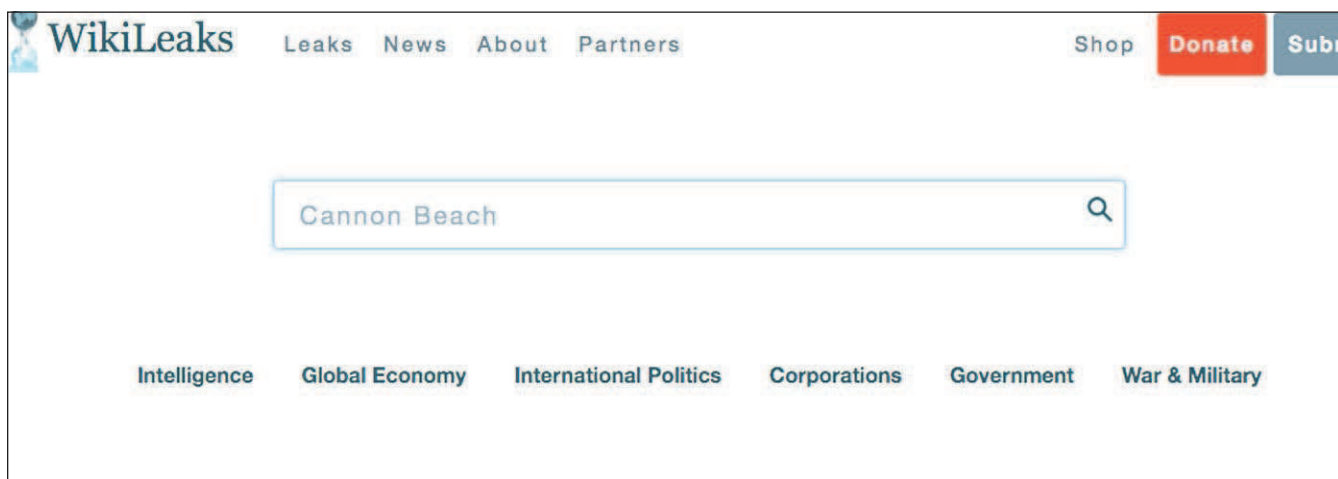


Views from the Rock



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Documents from WikiLeaks played a key role in the 2016 election.

# Cannon Beach, meet WikiLeaks

This column could get me arrested. Something only a little more extreme happened to journalist Barrett Brown, released in November after serving three years in federal prison for sharing a link to hacked emails from the intelligence group known as Stratfor. He was released from prison in late November 2016.

In a video on Brown's website, Trevor Timm of the Freedom of the Press Foundation says Brown "took information that may have been stolen or leaked and used it to do investigative journalism in the public interest."

While originally facing up to 100 years in prison for sharing other Stratfor hacked links in a chat room with other journalists, 11 of 12 charges were dropped and Brown ended up pleading guilty to transmitting threats, aiding hackers and obstructing authorities from carrying out a search warrant resulting in his three-year incarceration. Many of the charges were a result of the leak of credit card numbers — six months after the hack was revealed, giving Brown's defense argued, credit companies plenty of time to protect the accounts.

"This was a failure on our part," Stratfor CEO George Friedman told investigators eight days after the hack and months before the leaks were shared by Brown.

Unwisely, Brown, who said he was withdrawing from heroin at the time, threatened an FBI agent prior to his arrest in 2012. Along with jail time, Brown was ordered to pay more than \$829,000 in fines.

On a journalist's salary, he'll still be paying that back when Donald Trump Jr. is in the White House.

## Data dumps

I can assure you I am not withdrawing from heroin, printing any leaked credit card numbers or issuing any challenges. But as any self-respecting muckraking local journalist would do, I poked around on WikiLeaks and typed in the search term "Cannon Beach."

Who knew what juicy items I might stumble on? Two particular items caught my attention.

This document was obtained by WikiLeaks from the United States Congressional Research Service.

According to the WikiLeaks site, the record service is a congressional "think tank" with a staff of around 700. Reports are commissioned by members of Congress on topics relevant to current political events.

Despite taxpayer costs of more than \$100 million a year, its electronic archives are, as a matter of policy, not made available to the public.

The link to Cannon Beach?

Pretty tenuous, a mere footnote, referring to a 2005 opinion by Judge Sandra O'Connor on the subject of property takings — usually involving disputes between property owners and municipalities.

A 1994 Supreme Court decision held that Cannon Beach's denial of an oceanfront property owners' permit application to construct a seawall in the dry sand area of their property "does not constitute an uncompensated taking under the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution." It affirmed the state's goals of limiting development on "conditionally stable dry sand and the implementing city ordinances and department regulations do not constitute taking of the owners' property."

This is not the stuff of Cold War espionage — it can also be found at [supremecourt.gov](http://supremecourt.gov).

The second WikiLeaks reference to Cannon Beach comes in a hacked email from Stratfor, a global intelligence agency based in Austin, Texas.

In February 2012, WikiLeaks began publishing the Global Intelligence Files, more than five million hacked emails from the Texas headquartered "global intelligence" company Stratfor.

The emails date between July 2004 and late December 2011. These were the leaks that got Brown, then a contributor to The Guardian and Vanity Fair, in trouble.

According to WikiLeaks, the leaked Stratfor emails reveal "the inner workings of a company that fronts as an intelligence publisher, but provides confidential intelligence services to large corporations, such as Bhopal's Dow Chemical Co., Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and government agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Marines and the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency."

The WikiLeaks site says "the emails show Stratfor's web of informers, pay-off structure, payment laundering techniques and psychological methods."

Among the material several thousand emails exchanged by staff members between 2004 and 2011, including a short wire service report about the crash of a U.S. F-15 fighter jet into the ocean 35 miles off Cannon Beach. The single-seat aircraft, based at the Portland Air Base, was from the 142nd Fighter



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Journalist Barrett Brown was jailed for distributing links to a global intelligence company.

## Brown was ordered to pay more than \$829,000 in fines. On a journalist's salary, he'll still be paying that back when Donald Trump Jr. is in the White House.

Wing of the Oregon National Guard, went down while on a training mission.

The incident was nationally reported by United Press International (cited in the leaked document) and results of the investigation — that the pilot became disoriented during flight — published by The Seattle Post-Intelligencer, The Washington Post and others.

## Protections needed

Releasing hacked emails from WikiLeaks became a characteristic of the 2016 presidential campaign, leading to the demise of Hillary Clinton and her top aides, notably campaign vice chairwoman Huma Abedin (wife of the notorious nude Tweeter Anthony Weiner) and John Podesta, former chairman of the Clinton campaign.

To me, the email revelations were about as exciting as somebody else's Chinese food order. But they upset a lot of people on both sides and arguably led to a Trump win, along with a nudge-nudge wink-wink from the nation's FBI chief James Comey.

What do the Cannon Beach WikiLeaks reveal?

That a federal agency and international think tank really may not know much more than the rest of us: analysis of a 1994 Supreme Court decision and the rehashing of old news. Intelligence agencies, it appears, get the news from ... the newspaper.

With huge data dumps available to anyone with an internet connection, secrecy is only as good as your encrypted software.

Even Stratfor's intelligence information is available to the public with a subscription — \$39 a month or \$349 a year. A year of the Cannon Beach Gazette is a lot less and apparently has much of the same information.

According to [FreeBarrettBrown.com](http://FreeBarrettBrown.com), Brown is now working at D Magazine in Dallas, living in a half-way house while out on parole.

Brown's defenders seek to turn him into a cause célèbre, but he is far from the only journalist at risk for doing their job.

An arrest warrant was issued for NPR's Amy Goodman when she covered the Dakota Pipeline story — charges later thrown out by a North Dakota judge. The Committee to Protect Journalists lists 259 jailed reporters worldwide; 81 of those are in Turkey, a U.S. ally.

On January 10, we observed the anniversary of "Common Sense," Thomas Paine's classic plea for independence and a model of journalistic dissent.

Shockingly, the United States is listed as No. 47 out of 180 countries in the world in terms of press freedoms, described by the international journalists' group Reporters Without Borders as especially weak in terms of federal protections for whistle-blowers and lacking a federal shield law to protect sources.

Maybe I'm watching a little too much "Homeland," but I'm wondering if a little more public information just might make us a lot safer.

## CANNON SHOTS

R.J. MARX



# A Hawaii trip with mom

Did I tell you about my mom? How she is my inspiration in birding, reading, writing and well just about everything that makes my life deep and meaningful! Did you hear about the time we traveled to Hawaii together?

Oh wait, that's what's happening right now! We are on day three of a seven-day visit on Maui! Hawaii is the only state in the Union that my mom has not been to until three days ago. That completes her bucket list.

And for me, you may be already thinking, "Oh, the birds! Susan must be in paradise!" (excuse the pun) Well, you couldn't be more accurate! I am loving it. The birds here are exotic, loud, colorful and plentiful!

We are staying in upcountry Makawao. By the end of the first day, I had nine birds on my list and nine of them were life listers (birds I had never seen before) and that was mostly from sitting on the lanai and walking around the neighborhood.

Quoting the gracious friend we are staying "When I imagine a birder, you fit the bill!" I have yelled out bird sightings and names in the middle of conversations. And I am wearing out my sandals when I do my happy dance, usually done when I see a new bird. Not sure that's what other birders do, but I like that my "image" is a positive one.

My list is up to 20 now and includes a very special sighting of a pair of Nenes — Hawaiian goose — with a chick.

I may come back to the Oregon coast, but reporting from Hawaii seems like a possibility too!

Please join the First Sunday Cannon Beach Bird Walk. The next one will be on Sunday, Feb. 5, so if you're in town, join us at 9 o'clock at the Lagoon Trail on 2nd Street. Bring binoculars and wear appropriate clothing. Everyone is welcome!

Mark you calendars for the fifth annual North Oregon Coast Birdathon April 8. More details soon at [coastwild-life.com](http://coastwild-life.com)

• • •

*Susan has spent her life enjoying the great outdoors from the lakes and woods of Northern Minnesota, Mount Adams in Washington and now the Oregon beach environs. After spending many pleasurable hours driving her avid birder parents around, she has taken up birding as a passion. Susan resides on Neawanna Creek in Seaside where her backyard is a birder's paradise.*

## OBITUARIES

### Evelyn Mae Brown

March 13, 1922 — Jan. 1, 2017

Born March 13, 1922, to John P. and Tillie (Olson) Paulson in Duluth, Minnesota, Evelyn Mae Brown, 94, passed away Jan. 1, 2017, in Lacey, Washington.

In 1944, Evelyn married Jack B. Brown in Kirkland, Washington. The two lived for each other, and they enjoyed a wonderful 70 years together. They honeymooned in Seaside, Oregon, lived in Seattle while Jack was a career Seattle firefighter and she a secretary for the Renton School District, and spent their last 40 years together in Cannon Beach, Oregon. Evelyn moved to Lacey in mid-2015 to be closer to her daughter and family.

Evelyn is survived by her son, Michael John Brown; daughter, Jacquelyn (Brown) Shammel; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband; brothers, Al Brown and Leonard Brown; and sisters, Helen Linder and Alma Dean.

No services are planned. Please share memories at [www.FuneralAlternatives.org](http://www.FuneralAlternatives.org)

## LETTERS

### Professionals appreciated

We want to thank all law enforcement agencies and the Seaside Fire Department for the professional and caring way they handled the situation on Whisping Pines.

We appreciate you all for a job well done. Again, thank you.

Larry and Sharon Johnson  
Seaside

### Obituary Policy

The Seaside Signal publishes paid obituaries. The obituary can include a small photo and, for veterans, a flag symbol at no charge. The deadline for all obituaries is 9 a.m. the business day prior.

Obituaries may be edited for spelling, proper punctuation and style. Death notices and upcoming services will be published at no charge. Notices

must be submitted by 9 a.m. the day of publication.

Obituaries and notices may be submitted online at [www.dailyastorian.com/forms/obits](http://www.dailyastorian.com/forms/obits), by email at [ewilson@dailyastorian.com](mailto:ewilson@dailyastorian.com), placed via the funeral home or in person at The Daily Astorian office, 949 Exchange St. in Astoria. For more information, call 503-325-3211, ext. 257.

### Letters welcome

Letters should be exclusive to The Cannon Beach Gazette. We do not publish open letters or third-party letters.

Letters should be fewer than 500 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone numbers. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar and, on occasion, factual accuracy.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand and, rather than mentioning

the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters referring to news stories should also mention the headline and date of publication.

Submissions may be sent in any of these ways:

E-mail to [editor@cannonbeachgazette.com](mailto:editor@cannonbeachgazette.com); Online form at [www.dailyastorian.com](http://www.dailyastorian.com); delivered or mailed to the Gazette office at 1555 N. Roosevelt, Seaside, OR, 97138.

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**Contributing writers**  
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