

Views from the Rock

Cannon Beach 'still pretty gnarly' after all these years

On April 11, Cannon Beach city councilors enthusiastically endorsed a resolution that “embraces, celebrates, and welcomes its immigrant and refugee residents and their contribution.”

The policy is aimed to keep the roles of local and federal government clear and enforceable, rather than framed as a resistance to federal deportation practices.

City councilors passed a motion to hear the resolution at the next council meeting, which was met with a round of applause from an audience of about 30 people.

CANNON SHOTS
R.J. MARX



Why is this an introduction for an email Q&A with author Ursula K. Le Guin?

Because only a month ago, the part-time Cannon Beach resident Le Guin posted an impassioned plea for the nation’s immigrants, a strong rebuke to the national administration’s immigration policies.

“Becoming a Sanctuary City isn’t just a matter of words,” Le Guin wrote in a March 6 blog post. “It takes real commitment, long and steady resolve, and determined hope, to resist and keep resisting the politicians and interests that seek power by supporting those shameful policies, and the misguided citizens who imagine they will gain profit or status from them.”

Cannon Beach’s most celebrated author is and has been a voice for the disenfranchised and oppressed throughout her career. In 2014, she was awarded the National Book Founda-



JACK LIUI/FOR CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Ursula K. Le Guin speaking at the University of Oregon in Eugene in 2013.

tion Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. She is nominated for a 2017 Hugo Award for “Words Are My Matter: Writings About Life and Books, 2000-2016.”

To Le Guin, literature and political action are one and the same. At age 87, when she could rest on her laurels — she doesn’t. Her unyielding political voice keeps her on the front lines.

Be it sanctuary cities, the uniqueness of her Cannon Beach fictional twin city of “Klatsand” or her outer realms of Kirien, Anares or Earthsea, Le Guin celebrates the soul and the human imagination.

From her home in Portland, Le Guin granted a rare opportunity of an email interview to share her views of art, Cannon Beach and her life among the crows.

Question-and-answer

Q: Rex Amos tells me I should start by asking you about crows and your love of them. Is that a love of Cannon Beach crows or all crows, and what do they teach?

LE GUIN: Cannon Beach crows. Here in Portland they have displaced most of the small birds in our neighborhood, which is disturbing.

But the crows I got to know in CB I knew personally, and wow, what personalities!

For years one couple brought up their annual child in the big spruce across the street from us. The whole process was fascinating, from the spring courtship (much purring and beak-clattering) of the couple rejoining after the winter flock broke up, through the silent time when the infant is very small and vulnerable, to the noisy time when the infant is as big as its parents and spends half the time yelling “Food! Feed me before I fall out of the nest from starvation and die! Aaarghh!” and the parents yell back reassuringly, “Coming, darling! Hang on!”

Q: In Searoad’s Klatsand, there is a fictional Cannon Beach referred to in passing. Does Klatsand supplement Cannon Beach on the map or are they imaginary doppelgängers?

LE GUIN: I mentioned Cannon Beach in one of the stories so that people would know that Klatsand is NOT (quite) CB. Klatsand has a lot of elements of CB, but it also has bits of Seaside and Manzanita and Nehalem.

Q: What were your first impressions of Cannon Beach?

LE GUIN: Loved it from the start. Way, way back, in the ‘60s. It was a little artists’ hideaway town. The sculptor Joe Police was mayor. There were no megamansions owned by out-of-state millionaires, no big ugly cement walls on North Beach, it had its own hardware stores and indie drugstore and Osborne’s excellent grocery. It was more self-contained and a good deal, well, gnarlier. But it’s still pretty gnarly, thank goodness.

Q: At what point did you become aware of the city’s

seismic risk, and how did it impact you?

LE GUIN: They’ve been telling us we are going to fall into the ocean one of these days, for the last 50 or 60 years. I believe them.

Q: Do you see metaphor in the tsunami?

LE GUIN: I see total terror.

Q: If Cannon Beach made one civic move to create a better world, planet, utopia, what would it be?

LE GUIN: I believe that healing a planet or anything else begins, and often ends, at home. So, my answer is: Keep people with a sense of civic responsibility and the local ecology in charge of the town, people who take the long view and will stick to their guns about controlling “development.”

When a town hands itself over to realtors (as Portland has been doing lately) it begins losing everything that makes people want to live there.

Q: Last week, Cannon Beach voted to put a motion adopting inclusivity before the council at their next meeting. Do you think such a resolution would make sense in Cannon Beach, and if so what would you like it to say? If not, what would be a better alternative?

LE GUIN: I am glad to know that Cannon Beach is considering adopting an immigrant inclusivity resolution, and hope the City Council passes it unanimously.

It is unfortunate that our current federal government, by attempting to enforce policies that deny the very principles our Republic is founded on, makes such a resolution necessary. But it is good to see that Americans still refuse still refuse to be bullied into declaring any element of our communities inferior, unwelcome, or illegal — that we still “declare these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

¡Nadie es ilegal!

Introducing the new wines in the Puffin lineup

The calendar says it’s spring and wineries across Oregon are busy releasing their latest creations. We’re doing the same thing here at The Wine Shack and are proud to have our new Puffin vintages on the shelves. We’ve waited patiently for the releases because we know just how delicious these wines are and are glad to finally be sharing them with you.

The first new release is our 2016 Puffin Pinot Gris, which was named “best of class” and earned a double gold medal at this February’s Savor Northwest Wine Awards. This crisp, amber-colored pinot gris offers aromas of honeysuckle, apple blossoms, melon, and lemon zest follow which makes it so inviting. Pinot gris is Oregon’s signature white wine and our 2016 may be the best Puffin Pinot Gris we’ve made. I recommend serving this chilled. Puffin Pinot Gris pairs nicely with Asian cuisine, cheese plates, salads, fish and shellfish (especially crab cakes).

Our new 2016 Puffin Rosé of Pinot Noir was the biggest change in our portfolio. Past vintages of Puffin Rosé were made with a blend of Grenache and Syrah from Southern Oregon. Last year, I decided Puffin Rosé should be made from 100 percent pinot noir and moved rosé production to Pudding River Wine Cellars. The fruit for Puffin Rosé of Pinot Noir is sourced entirely from Pudding River’s estate Pinot Noir vineyard, the same vineyard that supplies fruit for our Puffin Pinot Noir. This wine earned a gold medal at Savor Northwest earlier this year and was a finalist for best of class.

This dry, salmon-colored wine delivers delightful notes of strawberry shortcake, pomegranate and candy apple. It’s almost impossible to mispair rosé with food as it goes nicely with just about everything. But, I find the best pairing to be a bottle of Puffin Rosé and a sunny day at the beach. We only made 100 cases of rosé this year, so this wine is going to sell out quickly.

Our 2014 Puffin Pinot Noir has a very different flavor profile than the 2013. The 2014 Puffin Pinot Noir leads with flavors of red cherry and raspberry paired while notes of classic Oregon Pinot Noir forest floor surprise from the background. If you’re an Oregon Pinot Noir fan, you’re going to love this wine. This wine earned a judge’s selection at the Great Northwest Wine Competition last fall and a silver medal at the Savor Northwest Wine Awards this year.

We also released our 2014 Puffin Cabernet Sauvignon which offers classic cab aromas of black cherry, black currant and herbs. On the palate, the dark fruit flavors of combine with notes of black licorice, coffee, sage and cedar. Puffin Cabernet Sauvignon is made entirely with fruit from Spofford Station Vineyard in Walla Walla, Washington. For a Pacific Northwest cab, that’s about the best pedigree you can have. Puffin Cabernet Sauvignon 2014 pairs nicely with a wide variety of foods, including grilled ribeye, beef stew, hard cheeses and pasta with marinara sauce.

Those are the new wines in the Puffin lineup. We also have our 2015 Puffin Chardonnay and Puffin Red Blend, which were released in 2016. We’ll be pouring Puffin wines a bit more often than we have in the past because customers have asked us to. We look forward to having you come in and taste the new wines!

Please drink responsibly. Don’t drink and drive. See you at The Shack!

LETTERS

What is truth on water rate hike?

The Daily Astorian of Tuesday, March 21, featured an article on the intent of Cannon Beach to hike water and sewer rates to residents by “up to 40 percent in July to fund needed water, wastewater and storm-drain repairs and maintenance.” The article goes on to quote Councilor George Vetter as saying, “The new rates will put us in line with what our neighbors to the north and south are paying.” George also states that rates have not gone up in 10 years. He should check his facts before making public statements.

I object to the proposed rate hikes based on the falsehoods stated by Mr. Vetter. First of all, water rates should be based on the costs of operating the system, not on what our neighbors charge. Our neighboring cities have dramatically different water storage, treatment and distribution systems. Their costs and their fees have no bearing on the costs of operating Cannon Beach’s system and should not be relevant in establishing local rates. Secondly, I just reviewed my water bills from the past five years and found, contrary to Mr. Vetter’s claim, they went up three times in the past five years alone (3.1 percent in 2014, 3.1 percent in 2015, and 7 percent in 2016).

Two years ago, City Manager Brant Kucera was quoted in The Daily Astorian as saying that water rates needed to be increased here to bring us in line with Warrenton’s water rates and shortly afterward our rates increased 7 percent. Warrenton’s water is sourced high in the hills east of Seaside and must be pushed through miles of pipeline just to reach their city limits. Their costs didn’t correspond to those in Cannon Beach then and they don’t now either.

Another issue I have with the proposed rate is the replacement of the existing reservoirs. While I concede

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The joys of springtime: Warblers and kinglets make their appearance

Spring is my favorite time of the year. Each day brings a new color of green to the opening buds and old faithful plants emerging from the ground. And the birds are putting on their best colors to attract a mate, including the neotropical migrating birds that are showing up every day! These are birds like warblers, shorebirds and the Osprey, that spend our winters in Central and South America, then migrate here to breed.

Last weekend, during the birdathon, my team was treated to one of those amazing mixed flocks of birds.

While standing on the bridge on the Lagoon Trail, we enjoyed first yellow-rump warblers. There were three flying around almost at the tops of the alders on the north end of the bridge. Looking more at eye level, we saw a male palm warbler, jumping from branch to branch and bobbing his tail the whole time. The bobbing is one way to recognize this species.

In the same bushes, there were many

BIRD NOTES
SUSAN PETERSON



orange-crowned warblers, moving around so quickly that they are hard to follow. Another species that flits around quickly are ruby-crowned kinglets who were in the mix too!

Then back to the tops of the trees for the first-of-year black-throated gray warbler. This is a 5-inch bird that is plain black and white unlike the other warblers. In the same tree top was one of my favorite warblers, a Townsend’s warbler. This little guy has bright yellow on its face and chest along with a black throat. This is one of my favorite Cannon Beach birds. I spent many lunch hours on the Lagoon Trail and enjoyed this bird in big numbers all summer long.

Our Birdathon team of Mitzi York, Terry Finlayson and myself coined a

phrase after this wonderful display — warbler neck! You may have guessed it includes a soreness in the neck area along with a bit of eye strain mixed in.

If you ask me, I think it’s totally worth it!

Come join us! The weather is improving for the First Sunday Cannon Beach Bird Walk. The next one will be on May 7, join a small group at 9 o’clock at the Lagoon Trail on 2nd Street. Bring binoculars and wear appropriate clothing. Come enjoy the great outdoors! Everyone is welcome! We’ll inspire a bit of the obsession to bird in you, even if for just one hour a month!

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.

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