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Tourists flock to Cannon Beach in the summer, which adds lodging tax dollars to the local economy.

Stretching the lodging tax

Cannon Beach and other cities experiment with tourism money

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

Looking to make creative use of the lodging tax, Cannon Beach may divert money from tourism promotion to an event center.

The idea came up during the early stages of contract negotiations with the Chamber of Commerce, which has been getting the tax money since 2015. The chamber uses 70

percent of the funding generated by state and local lodging taxes to promote tourism. City councilors are considering redirecting a percentage of that money to buy the former elementary school building for an event center.

“Granted, it would take away funds you are receiving,” Mayor Sam Steidel said at a city work session, “But it would also go into a project we think is pertinent and supports tourism.”

Cannon Beach joins a growing number of cities exploring how to use lodging tax dollars for capital projects or maintenance needs.

With more cities and counties facing budget shortfalls, there’s an effort to broaden the definition of what counts as tourism-related spending.

See Tax, Page 6A



Chamber awards come with a new director

Paino moves from interim to executive role

By R.J. Marx
Cannon Beach Gazette

The Cannon Beach Chamber Membership Awards celebrated achievement past and present, with longstanding events like Stormy Weather and the Sandcastle Contest complemented by the chamber’s newest activity, the Fat Bike Festival, coming to the city for its debut in April.

But before the first envelope announcing awards for top volunteers Tuesday night at the community hall, the chamber board announced new executive director Jim Paino.

Paino has served as interim director since Court Carrier left in November.

“This is our first formal announcement of Jim no longer being interim executive director, but executive director,” board president Greg Swedenborg said. “Jim has been absolutely fantastic to work with. On behalf of the board, thank you.”

A volunteer nine-person search committee ran ads and listed it for about a month, interviewed 21 candidates, pared it down to four, made a recommendation to the board to select Paino, Swedenborg said. The board backed that recommendation.

Paino was greeted by a standing ovation. “I really do work with good people and it’s great to have that,” Paino said. “I’ve been working at the chamber for nine years and I’m ready to take the next step.”

See Chamber, Page 5A



PHOTO CREDIT: RICK ABREGO

Tara Houck, Alona Vodegel, Marymarie Gater, Kristin Talamantez, Sheri Russell and Avigail Perez.

AND THE CANNON BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARD-WINNERS ARE:

ANNUAL SUPPORTER OF THE YEAR: Duane Johnson Real Estate

TOM DRUMHELLER EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP AWARD: Tom Drumheller

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: Barb Knop

EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE: Columbia Bank

MEMBER OF THE YEAR: Fresh Foods

City council rethinks marijuana ordinance

After evictions, councilors mull reversing mixed-use building decision

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

City councilors are considering reversing a decision that banned marijuana retailers from operating in buildings which include residences.

The topic, discussed during Tuesday’s City Council meeting, is being continued for a vote in April.

Reevaluating the ordinance that dictates where and how marijuana

can be sold in Cannon Beach came up originally after Matt Ennis, a former resident in the building that now houses Five Zero Trees, told city councilors at a July council meeting his landlord planned to evict him to rent the commercial space under him to the marijuana retailer.

In a 3-2 vote, city councilors affirmed the ordinance in August that forbids marijuana retailers from moving into mixed-use buildings. The idea to change the ordinance came from the fear that landlords with mixed use facilities would continue to evict tenants to allow marijuana retailers to rent their commercial spaces for a higher price than tenants can pay.

At the time, councilors who voted to keep the ordinance argued denying applications from weed stores seeking to operate in mixed-use buildings was a better approach.

But after the landlord evicted three residents to be in compliance with the ordinance, some city councilors began to reconsider the issue.

“We didn’t contemplate a business owner evicting residents to have a pot store,” city councilor Mike Benefield said. “Instead of having the city make that decision, we should let the resident decide whether or not they want to live above a pot shop.”

Councilor Nancy McCarthy, who originally voted to keep the ordinance, also has changed her position after see-

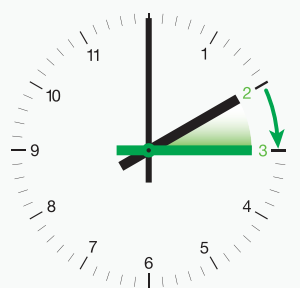
ing the “unintended consequences.”

While she supports allowing marijuana shops in mixed-use buildings, McCarthy argued Tuesday to keep a section of the ordinance that prohibits retailers from operating out of a residence. The current draft amendment would lift this prohibition that is in effect, which could unintentionally allow people with homes in the C1 zone — a zone that allows both commercial and residential use — to sell cannabis, McCarthy said.

“What I can envision is people selling marijuana out of their house. We would have no control over it because

See Pot, Page 6A

SPRING FORWARD



Daylight saving time starts on **Sunday at 2 a.m.** when clocks are turned to **3 a.m.** Sunrise and sunset will be about one hour later than the day before, which means there will be more light in the evening.

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BRENNNA VISSER

Dalin D’Alessandro uses an ax to turn over the sea lion for more dissection. Steller sea lions can weigh between 500 and 800 pounds.

Dead sea lion washes ashore in Cannon Beach

Researchers performed a necropsy

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

People watched in awe — and slight disgust — as researchers performed a necropsy on an adult Steller sea lion Saturday, March 3, at Silver Point Beach.

The sea lion washed up dead near Haystack Rock the morning of Feb. 26 before the

city decided to move the giant marine mammal south to a more remote section of the beach. Stranded animals are typically dissected quickly and quietly to avoid upsetting onlookers.

This time, Keith Chandler from the Seaside Aquarium said they decided to wait until the weekend so people attending the Coast Conference, a marine education and stewardship event, could watch for educational purposes. It so happened Debbie Duffield, a

See Sea lion, Page 5A