

Views from the Rock

Mayor Matty Brown steps up to the tee in Manzanita

Mayor Matty to the rescue. Gearhart's Mayor Matt Brown — known colloquially in Gearhart as "Mayor Matty" — is the proud owner of the nine-hole Manzanita Golf Links.

Brown purchased the course in October from Jim Pentz and Tony Erickson of Pine Grove Properties, and reopened for play on Feb. 1.

"There was a period there we weren't sure who was going to be running it or how it was going to be run, or if it was going to be open again," Dan Haag, director of the Manzanita Visitors Center said. "Keeping it part of this community has just been huge."

Both the Manzanita Open and the Mudd Nick charity golf tournaments have decades-long roots in Manzanita and losing the annual events was unthinkable.

"To lose those was a big fear, because the Eugene Schmuck Foundation and Mudd Nick Foundation both do really important things in the community and surrounding area," Haag said. "I think there was always a drive and desire to get the right person to come in and do it, and it sounds like we have."

This year's open takes place May 18 to May 20, with proceeds going to higher education and community services. The Mudd Nick tournament and auction, with the goal of access to the arts and athletic programs for children in the community, takes place Sept. 15.

Mayor Mike Scott recalled the communitywide angst felt after the course closed last fall. "We didn't want to lose it," he said. "We went through a dark period where we weren't sure what was going to happen, so it's worked out great. We're pretty happy to have it back."

Family affair

Founded in 1987 by Ted Erickson, the course hosted generations of golfers — and three generations of Ericksons.

When Ted's son Steve Erickson announced his retirement last fall, golfers and residents alike feared the loss of the 34-acre course to development, a potential double-whammy as a 37-acre neighboring property could see development of up to 450 housing units. Steve's son Tony Erickson now partners with Pentz.

"We went out and worked out how we could keep the course alive," Pentz said. "Tony and I wanted to keep the golf course rather than develop the property."

When Brown committed to purchasing the course, Erickson and Pentz granted a conservation easement on the land to the city of Manzanita.

"You see other places where they end up tearing golf courses down and building homes, and you end up losing something," Brown said.

Pine Grove Properties sold the course to Manzanita Golf Links LLC for \$1.3 million on Jan. 22, according to the Tillamook County assessor's office.

While the neighboring parcel is still "probably going to be developed," according to Scott, the nine-hole course will remain intact. "We went through a long process to get where we are today. It will either be operated as a golf course or will be perpetual greenspace if it's not operated as a golf course."

'Big part' of community

Nine-hole public courses like Manzanita and the Highlands — which also opened in 1987 — are "great ways to get new people into the sport," Brown said, inexpensive and usually under



Matty Brown at Highlands Golf Club.

CANNON SHOTS

R.J. MARX



two hours to play. "A lot of courses have been built in the last 20 years that are these big, expansive, amazing courses that cost hundreds of dollars," Brown said. "Only a certain segment of the population can really afford to play those type of courses."

In Manzanita, golfers will find challenging elevations and a mix of short, narrow holes and wider, open holes.

Highlands presents golfers with a par 31, Manzanita with a par 32. Gearhart Golf Course offers a 36 par for each of its nine holes; Astoria is the same.

"It's a pretty cool course for all ability levels," Brown said. "Seniors, ladies — every golfer has a story how much they enjoyed playing Manzanita."

Nine holes at Manzanita typically runs \$25, with an array of local and couples packages offered.

Brown said he now offers a junior unlimited golf pass for \$99, "just as a way to get more kids to play."

"We've got kids that play every day," Brown said. "We're trying to introduce as many new juniors to the game as possible. That's what it's about, why I'm in the game."

Manzanita's course is "a lot like the Highlands," built on sand dunes with good drainage. Golfers are limited only by their tolerance for North Coast weather.

Since opening, Brown said he has experienced an outpouring of support from the Manzanita community. "People are calling me, emailing. They're so happy this is going to remain a golf course."



R.J. MARX/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Matty Brown at Highlands Golf Club.

Residents love the open space and scenic walk around the perimeter, he said. A men's league Tuesday breakfast typically brings in about 40 guests. People in the community help maintain the landscaping.

Brown will continue his role as general manager and head professional at the Highlands Golf Club in Gearhart.

A separate management team, led by superintendent Jerrod Kunde and golf shop manager Jeff Mitchell, will manage the day-to-day operations at Manzanita.

"We know how to operate a nine-hole golf course and make it sustainable, not only for the people who play it, but for the whole community," Brown said.

He plans to come to Manzanita about once a week. "It's about time management."

Brown sees a golf course as a great way to maintain the environment, draw tourism and to provide a community service.

"It's Matt's operation," Pentz said. "When it comes to golf, Matt is very, very good at the business."



Ramon Bayer-Boatwright, played by Daniel Zovatto, rides a bike down Portland streets in "Here and Now."

Trauma with your comedy

Have you seen the new HBO series, "Here and Now"? Tim Robbins and Holly Hunter play the Mom and Dad of a multiracial family living in the Trump Era. The show is set in Portland, which makes it extra interesting. Writing about the show in The New Yorker, television critic Emily Nussbaum wrote, "The homes are rich-hippie real-estate porn," and noted that the sexual chemistry between two of the characters is worth the price of admission. She also said, "But depth requires digging. 'Here and Now' clearly wants to be part of the Resistance. So far, it's more the sort of thing that makes people mutter, 'This is why he won.'"

Politics aside, Alan Ball, the showrunner, creator of "Six Feet Under" and "True Blood" is known for his trauma-comedy style of storytelling. There's more trauma than comedy here as

VIEW FROM THE PORCH
EVE MARX



the characters struggle with what it means to feel alive and not become alien vampires. Other reviewers have commented how unlikeable the characters are, but that's like saying you can't see the sight of yourself in the mirror.

"Here and Now" is at heart a family drama. The family is complicated. Three of the children, now adults, were adopted from countries hurt by U.S. policies. Ashley, who works in fashion, was born in Liberia; she's married to a white Republican and they have a bi-racial kid. Duc, a "motivational architect" is a currently celibate sex addict. Duc was born to a prostitute mother in Vietnam.

His brain is riddled with images of his mother working on her back. Ramon, a video designer, is an orphan from the Columbian drug wars. Tim Robbins' character is a moody, broody philosopher; Holly Hunter is a former therapist who now runs a nonprofit. The couple also have one child born of their combined loins, Kristin, a precocious and snarky teenager whose best friend is a gender-fluid Muslim boy whose dad just happens to be Ramon's therapist.

Tim Robbins' character is burdened. He hasn't published anything meaningful in years, his professional stature at the college where he teaches is much diminished. While he obviously cares about his wife, nonetheless he's been dipping into their joint checking account to finance his relationship with a hooker. Holly Hunter's character is in full-blown career crises, not to mention she's about to fall into bed with a guy she knew decades ago when they were both students at Berkeley. My favorite character is Ramon's psychiatrist, played by the excellent Peter Macdissi, a Lebanese actor who is the real life partner of Alan Ball. Portraying the most messed-up shrink ever, he's accused by his wife of being a pothead.

Call me shallow, but the detail I'm most obsessed with is Holly Hunter's au natural face. I snooped around on-line to find before and after pictures of her with fillers and Botox; she appears to have quit both when she signed on to do "Here and Now." Her upper lip and chin area are positively wrinkled. I love the way she's chosen to play a desirable, educated, beautifully dressed, sophisticated woman of a certain age in Portland. Her beat-up face on this show is not a face you're likely to see on an affluent 60-year-old woman in New York or Los Angeles. That's thrilling.

Equally thrilling are the show's locations. The gorgeous house Holly and Tim live in is Laurelhurst. "I've been in that house," one of my Gearhart friends bragged. You see the Burnside Bridge and the Pearl and gentrified stretches of North Mississippi. You see homeless encampments. The only off note about the show and its Portland location is that it's never raining.

What's up with that?

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Monday, April 9

Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District, 6 p.m., 188 Sunset, Cannon Beach.

Tuesday, April 10

Cannon Beach City Council, 5:30 p.m., work session, City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Thursday, April 12

Cannon Beach Academy, 5:30 p.m. 3718 S. Hemlock St.

Tuesday, April 17

Cannon Beach Public Works Committee, 9 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Seaside School District Board of Directors, 6 p.m., 1801 S. Franklin, Seaside.

Thursday, April 19

Cannon Beach Parks and Community Services Committee, 9 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Cannon Beach Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Thursday, April 26

Cannon Beach Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Tuesday, May 1

Cannon Beach City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.

Why would anyone want to buy the county's jail bonds?

Yes, Clatsop County needs better jail facilities. The county plans to seek voter approval to issue bonds for new jail facilities that will be repaid by future property tax revenues. It all sounds pretty normal, right?

Nestled behind their podium up in Astoria, our county's elected leaders and paid staff are hoping that this time jail improvements will be successful. They really don't want to acknowledge that the investment community rates bonds for buyers by the risk that they will not be repaid.

Property taxes are based on property

valuation and Clatsop County has just over \$6 billion dollars of property that is taxed. The narrow Pacific coastal strip of the county from Arch Cape to the mouth of the Columbia River contains 70 percent of this property valuation. Using state-issued tsunami inundation maps, about 80 percent of the value of these properties will be destroyed by a mid-size Cascadia event. Event Astoria with about 13 percent of the county's assessed valuation will be hard hit by the earthquake portion of a Cascadia event because of the age of its downtown structures. The state puts the probability of such a Casca-

dia event as 1 in 3 over the next 50 years.

As an investor would you want to fund your children's education and your retirement on a "junk bond" like this? But wait, didn't Seaside School District just successfully issue \$100 million in school bonds? Yes, but under duress from Sen. Betsy Johnson, the state treasurer guaranteed these bonds. There is no one to guarantee these jail bonds nor many of these other proposed non-school bond issues presently being proposed by local agencies.

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