

Views from the Rock

Lady Gaga canceled her world tour and came to Cannon Beach.



# LADY GAGA SLEPT HERE

I've added "Cannon Beach" to my list of news alert search terms, delivering local, national and international links to my email inbox. Completely random, often barely relevant, real news, fake or otherwise, they nevertheless represent a mirror on our world we may not immediately recognize.

## The bad and the beautiful

When eight members of the Hart family were presumed dead after an SUV hurtled off the side of the mountain in California, a news tie to Cannon Beach seemed far-fetched, even unlikely. Both the Oregonian and Bend Bulletin looped Cannon Beach into their stories on the crash — through Jessica Smith, the woman who drowned her toddler in a Cannon Beach hotel in 2015. "Family annihilators," they are called by criminologists. Does this mean Cannon Beach will be forever entwined with this clinical subset of horrors?

Fortunately for the Chamber of Commerce and local lodging enterprises, the good outweighs the bad when receiving updates from around the country and around the world.

This headline from the L.A. Times is resplendent: "Cannon Beach captures the best of the Oregon Coast."

San Diego Magazine sent a reporter to Cannon Beach in 2017, describing it as "arguably the single most-Instagrammed location in Oregon."

"With boulders rising out of the waves, tree-covered, mountains and jagged cliffs cascading right into the ocean, this is the Northern Pacific at its finest," they enthuse.

No wonder so many Californians want to move here.

Links pop up for listicles like this one from Forbes touting "the world's 50 best beaches." Cannon Beach is hanging in there by a thread at No. 50, but nevertheless it's on the list, just behind No. 48, Ageeba Beach, Egypt, and No. 49, Diani Beach, Kenya.

"The Pacific Northwest's most majestic creation is Cannon Beach, in Oregon," Forbes declared in November. "Majestic rocks soar far above the picturesque coastline while the watercolor sky paints the sea in vibrant shades of blues and teals throughout the day."

The most beautiful beach in the world? Whitehaven Beach, Whitsunday Islands, Australia, says Forbes.

The Thrillist, an online food and lifestyle guide, selects Cannon Beach as "the best small town to visit in Oregon," ahead of McMinnville and Carlton. (Astoria comes in as No. 4).

One day my alerts reported Trip Advisor's "16th annual Traveler's Choice Awards for the best hotels in the U.S. for 2018," bringing our city into some lofty company. I must say I do feel some pride to know the Stephanie Inn is No. 5, sandwiched between the Hotel Emma in San Antonio, Texas, and the Santa Maria Suites in Key West, Florida.



Lady Gaga and friend as posed on Twitter.

## CANNON SHOTS

R.J. MARX



**'A WHOLE POPULATION WHO HAVE NEVER LIVED HERE CONSIDER CANNON BEACH PART OF THEIR LIFE STORY!'**

## Family memories

A whole population who have never lived here consider Cannon Beach part of their life story, impactful enough to be included in an obituary or a wedding announcement.

Consider John Butler Brassfield, who died March 8, at the age of 95. According to his memorial announcement in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, he spent his early years in Oregon, moving back to Seattle in 1939.

He served as president of the West Seattle Monogram Club. He was a golfing member at Meridian Valley Golf and Country Club, where he shot his age in his 80s. He and his wife Barbara traveled around the world. And they celebrated wedding anniversaries at the Stephanie Inn at Cannon Beach.

Tammy Harris of Moscow, Idaho, died Feb. 28 at age 55. A founding member of her local Habitat For Humanity, a certified nurse practitioner whose family was "of utmost importance," she and her husband married in Cannon Beach in 2007.

Larry and Kathy Morehouse of Yakima celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this month in Cannon Beach — a place they have been visiting for 45 years, according to the Yakima Herald-Republic.

## News of the weird

On the coast, we've read of the fishing boats washed ashore from

Japan subsequent to the 2011 tsunami. One remains beached at an end of Hug Point.

We received an alert in December with a new story twist. "Although the wreck clearly showed the signs of wear and tear you'd expect, it was also teeming with life, including gooseneck barnacles, which can sell for £90 a plate," wrote The Mirror, Britain's "intelligent tabloid." That would be British pounds sterling or about \$128. I was left shaking my head at the innovation of the writer, who had discovered a completely new angle to a five-year-old story. Who would ever think of eating the 7-year-old barnacles off a boat that had quite possibly been exposed to radiation after the meltdown of the Fukushima nuclear reactor?

Those Brits have their finger on the pulse of Cannon Beach, for sure. It took this alert from another Brit tabloid, The Sun, to inform us that we just missed a visit from Lady Gaga in our own backyard.

"Lady Gaga is back in the recording studio after health problems made her axe her latest tour," wrote The Sun in early March. "She has teamed up again with Born This Way and Artpop producer DJ White Shadow in Cannon Beach, Oregon — an area with 'healing properties.'"

Lady Gaga cancelled her last tour due to fibromyalgia, and the inference is that Cannon Beach is the Lourdes of the North Coast. "Back in Malibu after having spent some time in Oregon," Gaga tweeted.

Links to her Instagram account confirm what appears to be the visit, with pictures of the iconic sea stacks.

If her bassist Jonny Good hadn't shared the story with the tabloids, we would have never known.

I continue to check my alerts, not only for Cannon Beach and Seaside, which I cover, but Saugatuck, Michigan, where my dad lives, and Katonah, New York, where I lived and worked for a newspaper for 20-some years. It's almost like being there.

# Don't have a toothache in Cannon Beach

During my high school years, my mother and I lived in an apartment above a dentist office. The apartment was the top floor of a small two-story house. The dentist, who owned the building, used the first floor for his practice. Our apartment had two bedrooms, a bathroom, a living room, and an eat-in kitchen. The apartment had its own entrance; there were two front doors to the house, one leading to the apartment upstairs, the other to the dentist office. These doors were a source of confusion to his patients. It wasn't unusual for me to come home from school to discover a person or two reading magazines in our living room, mistaking it for the dental reception area.

I often wonder what it would be like today for me to live in an apartment over a commercial business. In Cannon Beach it might be over a store, a restaurant, a gallery, or even a medical office. It appears there is no dentist in Cannon Beach. It couldn't be an apartment over a pot shop as that isn't legal according to some ordinance. I remember a brief conversation months ago with one of the gentlemen who moved their home décor business in Cannon Beach to Astoria when the ground-floor retail space became a marijuana shop. The men lived above the store, so not only were they forced to relocate their business, but they also had to move house. That seemed like a dumb reason to force a tenant out. That seemed like a dumb reason to force a tenant out. I'm glad the city remedied that last week by changing the ordinance and allowing such arrangements.

Remember that old show, "The Mothers-In-Law" starring Kay Ballard and Eve Arden? When Eve's daughter married Kay's son, to save money, the young couple moved into Kay — or maybe it was Eve's — garage apartment. If it were legal, a garage apartment in Cannon Beach I think would be charming to live in, especially if it was close to the beach or out of the tsunami zone. A modest two-car garage is approximately 20 feet wide by 20 feet deep or approximately 400 square feet. I lived in apartments in Greenwich Village that weren't any bigger. Location, as they say, is everything.

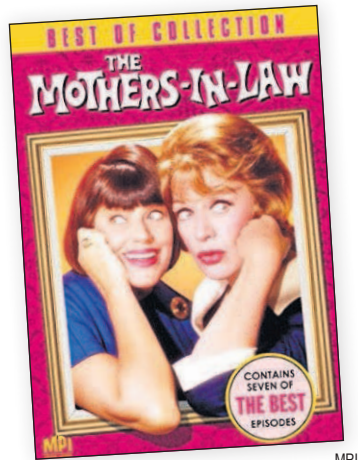
Before moving to the Pacific Northwest, my husband and I lived in a New York suburb where accessory housing was a hot potato issue. As taxes skyrocketed, people on fixed or lesser incomes scrambled to make ends meet. Some of them applied to the town planning board, requesting permission to turn portions of their home into accessory housing. Depending on available parking and ceiling height, some, but not many, requests were granted. The homeowners always argued they needed the income, and also that they were helping to grow the tiny but much needed affordable housing market.

I checked real estate websites today for available apartments for rent in Cannon Beach. Only one came up, a 740-square-foot one bedroom one bath unit fully furnished for \$1,250 a month. The market, as you might imagine, is very tight. There were no apartments available whatsoever above any commercial business.

It was decades ago, but I still remember loving living over the dentist's office. It was never boring and we had a key so that in the evenings and on Sundays we could adjust the heat. (The thermostat for the entire house was located in his office.) Sometimes when my mother was in a bad mood, which happened often, I'd slip downstairs and prowl around reading dental files. The eerie room where the dentist did plaster work to make his dental molds was like a weird art studio.

Not everybody gets to live above a dentist's office but I'm glad I did. Meanwhile finding affordable long-term rental housing in Cannon Beach remains increasingly elusive.

VIEW FROM THE PORCH  
EVE MARX



Now these two really knew how to live it up!

# Music of the season: Singing 'plurri, kiwi, plurri, kiwi'

You probably know more bird sounds than you think you do! One doesn't need to be a nature lover to hear birds. There is no need to hike miles and miles into the woods or along the beaches to encounter birds and hear their melodies. In Cannon Beach, it's as easy as being outside or stepping behind the library or pausing as you head into the community center.

Now that spring has sprung, this renewing season of the year, it's easy to find birds because they are singing and trying to locate each other for breeding. (Bonus for spring are the fancy feathers they are wearing!)

Have you heard the American robins singing with their plurri, kiwi, plurri, kiwi, repeated over and over? I find it hard to miss the song of the white-crowned sparrow because he sings it from the treetops and the sound can really travel! And,

## BIRD NOTES

SUSAN PETERSON



of course, there is the red-winged blackbird with its tail pumping chuck-chuck and melodious trill konka reeeeee song you can hear from Pompey Marsh almost anywhere in downtown Cannon Beach.

When I took up birding as a passion, six years ago, it seemed to me the most efficient way to start identifying birds was by their unique songs. I sat at home roaming through my field ID books, listening to CDs and viewing various websites finding the most common birds in the area and what they had to say! Then I was to go into the field and apply my newfound knowledge.



SUSAN PETERSON

## Red-wing blackbird singing its song.

Well, that was a total bust for me. I was unable to remember any of the specific songs to each bird. Luckily I have found what works for me. Hearing and seeing a bird at the same time is the way my brain stores this

information. Although slower than my original "plan," I am able to add five to 10 bird songs to my repertoire each year.

Whether I know the bird that belongs to the singing or not, I enjoy the

music, one of the many soundtracks of nature and my life. I hope you will get out and enjoy the soundtrack of Cannon Beach too!

Remember that a small group of people gather for the First Sunday Cannon Beach Bird Walk. The next one will be on May 6. Join the group at 9 o'clock at the Lagoon Trail on Second Street. Bring binoculars if you have them (we often have extras if you don't) and wear appropriate clothing. Everyone is welcome!

Susan has spent her life enjoying the great outdoors from the lakes and woods of northern Minnesota, to Mount Adams in Washington and now the Oregon coast. 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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