



A flattening demand for vacation rental permits raises questions

Growth seen in Seaside and Arch Cape

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

Vacation rentals have surged in popularity on the North Coast, part of a pattern of tremendous growth in an industry expected to be worth \$36.6 billion nationally by the end of the year.

Seaside issued about 430 vacation rental permits last year, compared to 350 seven years

ago, about a 23 percent increase.

In rural Clatsop County, vacation rentals went from 93 in 2010 to 161 last year, half of which were in Arch Cape.

But in Cannon Beach, contrary to public perception, the number of permitted vacation rentals has actually plateaued, sitting at about 200 a year for the past five years.

For people involved in the vacation rental industry, there isn't a clear answer why permits in Cannon Beach remain flat.

Unlike some communities, such as Gearhart and Manzanita, Cannon Beach does not cap the number of standard permits and the

number of second homes remains largely unchanged.

Somewhat complicated regulations could possibly be a deterrent for property owners, City Planner Mark Barnes said, but not a large one.

"Whenever I talk to someone getting their first rental permit, I warn them, 'This is really complicated,'" he said. "In my five years here I've never had anyone throw up their hands and say it's not worth it ... so my general feeling is our rules are not much of a disincentive."

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What's on the ballot

Election Day is Nov. 6

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

With election day coming up this Tuesday, Cannon Beach voters will have to consider a Clatsop County jail bond, a county-wide marijuana tax, the Fire Chief levy and two City Council seats.

Here's a quick overview of what's on the ballot:

City Council position

Two seats on the City Council and the mayor's seat will be on the ballot. The mayor's race is uncontested, with incumbent Sam Steidel seeking re-election.

On the council, incumbent Mike Benefield, real estate agent Robin Risley, and hotelier and Cannon Beach Chamber board president Greg Swedenborg are vying for two council seats currently held by Benefield and George Vetter in the November election. Benefield served four years on the Planning Commission before being appointed to the council in 2013. He was elected in 2014, largely on a platform to push for more affordable housing. If re-elected, Benefield said developing more long-term housing would remain a priority.

Over the course of three decades, Risley has served on several boards and committees, including the Cannon Beach and Clatsop County planning commissions, the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission and Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce board. She was also appointed the president of the Clatsop Association of Realtors last year. If elected, Risley would work on finding solutions for the Cannon Beach Elementary School property, rebuilding City Hall and other capital projects on the city's plate. Priorities for Risley are bolstering the arts, as well as preserving the character of Cannon Beach for both full-time residents and tourists.

A Cannon Beach native and co-owner of The Waves Oceanfront Lodging, Swedenborg decided to run after feeling the business community and working families needed a stronger voice. If elected, Swedenborg would focus on promoting sustainable tourism, affordable housing and addressing parking issues. He advocates for more private and public cooperation to address the affordable housing shortage, like supporting tax rebates, providing land at a lower cost to those intending to build affordable homes or other solutions that don't involve the city being a landlord.

Fire chief levy

Voters will be asked to renew a five-year fire chief levy for the Cannon Beach Rural Fire Protection District. The levy covers the chief's salary, vehicles, administrative costs and supplies. Voters originally voted 67 percent to 32 percent in favor of the levy during the Special Election in September, but it failed

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A student runs across the playground equipment at Cannon Beach Academy.

TIME TO PLAY

Cannon Beach Academy celebrates its first playground equipment set

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

Students at the Cannon Beach Academy got to slide, jump and climb for the first time on the school's new playground equipment Thursday, Oct. 18. The equipment was made possible by long time charter school supporter and board member Barb Knop, who donated the equipment in honor of her late husband, Mike Knop.

"Mike loved to play. He made play a part of his day every day of his life," Knop said while watching the students run up and down the play set. "I try to honor him everyday day, and I thought this would be a perfect way."



PHOTOS BY BRENNNA VISSER/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Students give the slides on the new playground equipment a try at Cannon Beach Academy.

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Community turns out to support Matt Owen



CLAIRE DEMAY

Matt Owen is the bar manager at the Cannon Beach American Legion Post 168.

Fundraiser is a response to a cancer diagnosis

By Brenna Visser
Cannon Beach Gazette

Anyone who has stopped for a beer after work from Gearhart to Cannon Beach in the past decade has likely met Matt Owen.

Since moving to the North Coast in 1999, Owen has been behind the counter at hangouts like McMenamins, The Driftwood, The Lumberyard Grill & Rotisserie, and, most recently, Cannon Beach American Legion Post 168.

Locally, he has earned a reputation as one of the most notable bartenders.

"I just kind of fell into (the restaurant industry)," Owen said. "It's fun to get to be in people's lives. I never wanted to be the guy who sat behind a desk all day."

But the customers he served for years are now turning the tables to serve him.

For about a year and half, Owen, 36, was

getting constant migraines and blind spots in his vision. At the end of August, one migraine was bad enough to send him to the emergency room, and he was flown to Portland for surgery to remove a tumor.

About a month later, he was diagnosed with brain cancer.

"I think I went numb when I heard ... And I've been numb since then," Owen said. "I've been too busy trying to balance my work, my daughter, family ... And how I'm going to pay for all of this?"

When he told the American Legion about the diagnosis, the legion's auxiliary jumped into action to organize a fundraising dinner to help pay for health care costs.

"We're just here to help Matt," said Jack Kerwin, the legion's first vice commander. "I mean, everybody just loves the guy."

In one night, dozens of customers and co-workers over the years came out to raise about \$16,000 to pay for treatment.