

Taking an off-season getaway to the new and expanded McMenamins

General manager and director of golf of Gearhart golf links Jason Bangild met me at the entrance in a golf cart — what else? — to provide a tour of the new facilities.

McMenamins and Gearhart Golf Links recently completed extensive updates to the property, adding 16 rooms, a “Swingers Lounge” and the Clam Bed, which is a 20,000-square foot putting green conveniently located adjacent to the new Sand Bar — serving pizza, sandwiches, salads and burgers along with handcrafted ales, wine and cocktails.

Additional golf expansions include the Golf and Fitness Center created by Foresight Golf, complete with a launch monitor and golf-specific workout area for year-round use.

The Gearhart Golf Course is the oldest course west of the Mississippi, Bangild said, built as a four-hole course in 1892.

The course was established by Robert Livingston, one of the founding members of the Waverly Country Club and several designers have touched the property over the years, including Chandler Egan who was the last American to win a medal in the Olympic for golf in 1904.

Egan went on to settle in the Pacific Northwest, where he designed golf courses from Pebble Beach to Seattle, including the original Seaside Golf Course in 1923.

Owned by Tim Boyle, Joe Boyle and Molly Boyle, independent of the family’s interest in Columbia Sportswear, the Boyles lease the hotel to McMenamins and office space to Gearhart by the Sea.

The club has about 400 golf members, and hotel visitors receive discounts for play. Eighteen holes run \$75 in-season and \$50 in the off-season. Juniors 13 and under accompanied by an adult are free, with discounts for teens and students.

Down the road — accessible only by cart or on foot — is the new Sand Bar, a cozy 450-foot space selling hot dogs, turkey sandwiches, elk sausage, two wine taps and six beer taps.



R.J. MARX

Sara Wilder welcomes guests at the Sand Bar.

“Brian and Mike McMenamin love their small bars,” Bangild said. “For years they’ve talked about having a small bar on the property and for years we never found the right place until this.”

The signature cocktail is called the “Time-Out,” Beefeater Gin and soda on the rocks, twist of lime.

Adorned by a bar top from a tree struck by lightning at McMenamins Cornelius Pass Roadhouse, the Sand Bar is the third bar on-site, joining the Sand Trap Pub and Pot Bunker Bar. “Officially it’s our halfway house for golfers,” Bangild said.

It looks like the perfect place to get into trouble, although don’t expect to make a quick getaway on a golf cart.

The neighboring putting green known as the Clam Bed was designed by John Strawn of Global Golf Advisors and built by James Milroy of Milroy Golf Systems. The green is billed as the perfect spot for a kid’s first putt or an hour for the advanced golfer, replete with “a lot of swales and dips,” according to Bangild.

CANNON SHOTS

R.J. MARX



When the rainy weather turns south, expect golfers to check out the golf and fitness center, fondly referred to as “the Swingers Lounge.”

Half the room is a fitness center with workouts, cardio, strength and golf-specific training. The south half divided by barn doors is the virtual golf area with the launch monitor and instructional area.

Computers and their cameras provide data for instructional use — club head speed, ball speed, spin rate, trajectory and more. The Foresight system delivers any one of 14 virtual golf course experiences, from Oak Lawn to Pebble Beach, replete with real-time weather.

When you’ve had enough, you can go upstairs to your room in the Annex, each room with one-of-a-kind headboards and en suite



R.J. MARX

Golf course manager Jason Bangild in the new Swingers Lounge Golf and Fitness Center.



MCMENAMINS

The Fore Deck is an expansive new patio with comfortable outdoor seating and is located just outside the property’s pro shop.

bathrooms.

Following the expansion, McMenamins Gearhart Hotel now has a total of 34 guest rooms including a bunk room, private rooms with king- or queen-sized beds, private bathrooms and televisions. Each

room is fashioned in Pacific Northwest style, weaving McMenamins’ signature artwork throughout.

Not bad at an off-season price from about \$150 to \$250 per night, especially if you take advantage of the golf vacation.

Finding a home for a pet in need

When we moved to the north coast nearly four years ago, we brought with us Basil, an older Lhasa apso, and Rinaldo, an elderly Chihuahua. Basil was what I call a pet shop rescue; at six months old, he was too big for the pet shop window and he’d been bought and returned twice. His future was uncertain, not to mention he was born crippled. Rinaldo we rescued from a shelter back east. Ten years old at the time of the adoption, he was scrawny and mostly toothless. At the Brooklyn shelter where he was an owner surrender, he was put on the euthanasia list.

By the time we arrived on the north coast and moved into our rental, Rinaldo was nearly blind. He was well into his teens, and while he’d gained a little weight, cataracts had turned his eyes a ghostly white. Except to do his business, he rarely went outside. He didn’t enjoy walks anymore, but he liked lying in the sun. He memorized the new furniture arrangement and found his way around.

A year and a half ago we moved into our own home. Again, it was a challenge for Rinaldo to learn where things were. He memorized the backyard, although he often couldn’t find his way back inside the house. He knew where his bed was, but eventually couldn’t find the water bowl.

Although he rarely ventured off the front stoop, he had two great summers basking in the sun. Three weeks ago more things started breaking down for him, and I made the decision to help him out of this world. We brought him to Bayshore Animal Hospital in Warrenton where everyone is very kind.

Imagine my surprise a few days ago to learn a friend of mine made a donation to Clatsop Animal Assistance in Rinaldo’s name. I received a letter from Linda Dygert, informing me of the donation.



EVE MARX

Clatsop County Animal Control and Shelter offers a second chance for many animals.

VIEW FROM THE PORCH

EVE MARX



The mission of Clatsop Animal Assistance is to give every domestic animal coming into the shelter their best chance at adoption.

The organization is 100 percent run by volunteers who provide medical services, promotion, and adoption support to the animals housed in the Warrenton shelter. Every dime of every donation goes to the care, promotion, and adoption of shelter pets. The letter about the donation included a photo of a very old poodle girl who required medical attention and received it from CAA.

“She has a great home with people who will be able to provide her with a

great life,” Dygert wrote. I could see from the picture attached the poodle is probably blind.

A friend reminded me how rare it is for people to adopt really old dogs. Everyone wants a puppy, or at least something young. But I can attest there is a lot to be said for adopting seniors. Rinaldo was a daily reminder of the power of perseverance. In the face of cruel infirmity, he was feisty and fearless.

If you love animals and are interested in their welfare, consider a donation to Clatsop Animal Assistance. They do selfless and tireless work providing medical care to shelter cats and dogs who otherwise might not get adopted. For more information about CAA, log on to www.dogsncats.org or call 503-861-0737. CAA is open from noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. CAA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Oregon corporation.

LETTERS

Volunteers needed for Spay & Neuter store

The Spay & Neuter Thrift Store in Seaside has been contributing to the welfare of animals for over 45 years and is continuing that dedicated service today.

Mr. Pershing of Gearhart started the thrift store in his garage. Needing more space, it has grown from one to two and now three rooms of donated items; all clean, wearable and usable goods to serve the community and family. From ribbon to dishes, jeans to jewelry, the store benefits from the contributions you share. Seasonal items are stored until the appropriate time of year or holiday when they are then available for purchase.

The sales generated from the store provide vouchers that are honored by veterinarians in our area for Clatsop County residents to use for their dogs and cats for spay and neutering. The heartfelt mission of the non-profit store is to serve the community by enabling pet owners to care for their furry friends and reduce the population of unwanted and uncared for animals.

This store provides a great service to the community but only through the commitment and love from volunteers.

The volunteers are the heart, soul and muscle of

the store. They love one another and are dedicated to the store’s purpose. There’s laughter but also a lot of hard work. You can see their efforts the minute you walk into the store. It’s organized, clean and items are tastefully displayed. Our volunteers know how to take the donations and change them to worthwhile merchandise.

But the store needs you. It needs more volunteers. A four-hour shift, one or more days per week will support the purpose of the thrift store, providing volunteers with friendship and camaraderie. Consider the opportunity.

The product of devotion to this little store were 606 certificates provided this year. That’s \$32,580 going to veterinarians to care for our pets. Since 2014, 4,021 vouchers have been issued to pet owners in Clatsop County, including folks who care for feral cats. Those are numbers to celebrate. Contributions from the store also benefit local food banks and Clatsop County Animal Shelter.

So, consider joining us; we need you. Bring your passion for the health and welfare of animals and be a member of our team.

Jeanne Nordmark Gearhart

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