

An event where the trees are the stars

Money to go to new emergency room

Cannon Beach Gazette

On Saturday, Dec. 1, 365 guests filled the Seaside Civic and Convention Center and raised a record-breaking \$230,000 for Providence Seaside Hospital Foundation.

The 21st annual event supported the foundation's "Beyond 911" campaign to expand emergency care at Providence Seaside Hospital.

This year's theme "Wonder," represented a spin from the concept of the advent calendar, and encapsulates the expectation and excitement of Christmas.

Event-goers rang in the holidays at this festive gala and purchased 17 decked-out Christmas trees and a signature piece of art from Dan Chen.

The top grossing tree "Ireland County Christmas" sold twice, included a trip to Ireland and brought in a total of \$11,500.

This year's festival



Bidders at the Providence Safeway Festival of Trees. Funds raised will go to a new emergency room at Providence Seaside Hospital.

helped the foundation meet their \$1.5 million goal for the capital campaign.

During the past year, the foundation has been working to raise \$1.5 million toward an approximately \$6.7 million plan to create facilities that support emergency care.

The union health district will contribute another \$1 million and the rest of the money will come from Providence Health and Services.

The current emergency facilities were constructed about 50 years ago and last

updated in the early 1990s. They are small, outdated and poorly configured to provide patients and families with security and privacy, according to the foundation.

While the goal may have been met, the fundraising campaign continues. Construction is due to begin in early 2019.

The project will be completed in about 18 months, but the process will take place in stages so the emergency department can remain open.

Government under the influence?

Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of Russian efforts to influence, attack or sabotage the 2016 presidential election as well as involvement in this effort by officials from President Donald Trump's campaign seems to have reached a fever pitch in the past month.

This seems especially the case with recent plea agreements, indictments and sentencing recommendations for Michael Flynn, Paul Manafort and Michael Cohen—all actors with close relationships to Trump, his campaign organization and lot of Russians.

Media coverage of Mueller's ongoing investigation, which began in May 2017, has offered an unrelenting drumbeat. Those really interested in Mueller's progress and findings need a scorecard to keep all the players straight.

Fortunately, several experienced investigative reporters recently have published books that offer just such guidance, two of them currently available at the Cannon Beach Library. Having lost track of the big picture of this investigation, I checked out "Russian Roulette: The Inside Story of Putin's War on America and the Election of Donald Trump" (2018) by Michael Isikoff and David Corn and "Fear: Trump in the White House" (2018) by Bob Woodward.

Presently the chief investigative correspondent for Yahoo News, Isikoff has been an investigative journalist for the Washington Post, Newsweek and NBC News. He was on a Newsweek team that received the Ed Cunningham Memorial Award from the Overseas Press Club in 2001 for coverage of the war on terror, and the Book of the Month Club named his book "Uncovering Clinton" the Best Non-Fiction Book of 1999.

Corn, chief of the Washington bureau for Mother Jones and Washington editor for The Nation, received the 2012 George Polk Award for Political Reporting for his coverage of the "47 percent story" that revealed Mitt Romney's comments about Obama supporters paying no income taxes at a \$50,000-a-plate fundraiser, comments that hardly advanced Romney's 2012 election chances.

"Russian Roulette," the second book Corn and Isikoff have co-authored,



AT THE LIBRARY
JOSEPH BERNT

concentrates on a period beginning in 2013 when Trump desperately sought support of Vladimir Putin and oligarchs close to him to develop a Moscow Trump Tower, particularly before and during Trump's Miss Universe Pageant in Moscow. Corn and Isikoff conclude with a summary of the Mueller investigation in late 2017 and early 2018 as "Russian Roulette" went to press.

The strength of "Russian Roulette" as a guide to understanding events surrounding the 2016 election is its unrolling of facts, names and linkages between Trump's world and Putin's supportive oligarchs and cyber warriors. Equally important is their analysis of how media ignored the big story — criminal Russian hacking of the Democratic National Committee site and John Podesta's email — but focused on the content of stolen emails, strategically released to damage the Clinton campaign just before the election. As Trump's "Access Hollywood" tape, once expected to end his campaign, quickly vanished from the headlines, media continued to remind voters of Clinton's use of her private server for government communications. Hillary Clinton couldn't catch a break as election day neared.

Woodward has worked for the Washington Post since 1971 as a reporter and now as an associate editor. Most famous for his reporting with Carl Bernstein on the Nixon Watergate coverup and co-authorship of "All the President's Men" and the "Final Days" about life in the Nixon White House, Woodward has published 19 nonfiction bestsellers, has shared in two Pulitzer Prizes for his reporting and has received numerous other journalism honors and awards. He has earned a reputation for trustworthy investigative reporting solidly based on personal interviews and supported by multiple sources, documents and public records.

"Fear: Trump in the White House" — relies on traditional reporting methods Woodward has employed in his many insider accounts of the

White House years of the last four presidents—methods that push narratives forward through factual statements and quotations with little editorial commentary.

Unlike "Russian Roulette," "Fear" concentrates on the first 15 months of the Trump presidency with little attention to the Trump's interests in Russia or the campaign prior to his inauguration. References to the campaign, Trump interests and activities in Russia and Russian interference in the presidential election allude to investigations by Congress, intelligence agencies and Mueller after Trump assumes the presidency.

Isikoff's and Corn's account of the Trump campaign and first year in office leaves little doubt but that members of his campaign staff and family did coordinate with the Russian effort to disrupt the 2016 election. By concentrating on policymaking arguments of Trump and his administration, Woodward remained seemingly disinterested in the collusion question and painted the Trump White House as far less disorderly than have Isikoff and Corn and numerous other journalists. The final paragraph of "Fear" — after John Dowd, the President's defense attorney, resigns when Trump insists on testifying—suggests that not only Dowd but also Woodward suspects Mueller never had a solid collusion or obstruction case:

"But in the man and his presidency Dowd had seen the tragic flaw. In the political back-and-forth, the evasions, the denials, the tweeting, the obscuring, crying 'Fake News,' the indignation, Trump had one overriding problem that Dowd knew but could not bring himself to say to the president: 'You're a f---ing liar.'"

In addition to "Russian Roulette" and "Fear," both available at the library, dedicated readers might use the library's interlibrary loan service to obtain a copy of Michael Wolff's "Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House" (2018) or two books by David Cay Johnston, a meticulous investigative and financial reporter, who has followed Trump's career since the mid-1990s: "The Making of Donald Trump" and "It's Even Worse than You Think: What the Trump Administration Is Doing to America" (2018).

Getting into the spirit, without Yorkshire pudding

Some friends were over the other night. We picked up A&B Pizza in Seaside. We sat on high stools at our bar. When we moved to the beach, I said farewell to my dining room table as this house has no dining room.

After the pizza, women moved to the living room. We talked about Christmas preparations, past and present. My friend has a thing where she only does Christmas every other year. This year is her year off. She's going to Hawaii.



The Food Network
Yorkshire pudding — everyone's favorite over the holidays.

VIEW FROM THE PORCH
EVE MARX



"For years our tradition never changed," I said. "Christmas Eve we had a festive meal at home of oysters Rockefeller and smoked salmon and deviled eggs. We opened a couple of presents. Christmas morning, after coffee, I made pancakes and then we opened more presents. Then I'd start fussing with the Christmas dinner, which took all day to make. I did prime rib with Yorkshire pudding; we had string beans dressed in sautéed shallots and roasted chestnuts and Brussels sprouts. I'd make an apple pie. As a snack in the middle of the day I put out a bowl of my mother-in-law's famous shrimp dip."

My Christmas gift list used to be long. There were lots of gifts to give.

There were gifts for my son's teacher and his bus driver and gifts for my son to give his friends. I gifted my hairdresser, our babysitter, the UPS driver and the guy who plowed our driveway. My husband gave gift cards to everyone in his office; at the barn where my pony lived, I gifted all the grooms. My girlfriends always wanted to get together for a holiday drink or meal and that always involved exchanging presents. Then there were the presents that had to go out early by mail to my in-laws and my stepsister. By the time Christmas rolled around I felt pretty broke and in the hole, but it seemed there was no choice.

Christmas these days is a far more modest affair although there are still gifts to give. The list has shrunk considerably, which is good but a little sad. I've realized over the years that wrapping all those presents (and truth be told I am a terrible gift wrapper) put me in the holiday spirit.

YORKSHIRE PUDDING

If you would like to try it, here's the recipe.

Stir into a bowl 7/8 cup flour and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Make a well in the center and pour in 1/2 cup milk and 1/2 cup water. Stir and then beat until fluffy and add 2 eggs. Continue to beat until large bubbles rise to the surface. Let stand covered and refrigerated for 1 hour and then beat again. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Have ready a hot, ovenproof 9x13" dish containing about 1/4 cup hot beef drippings. Pour in the batter and bake 20 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees and bake 10 or 15 minutes longer. Serve at once.

We used to put up a Christmas tree and a wreath and festoon the house with greens. For a joke, one year instead of a tree, inside the house I had one of those outdoor white painted metal lighted reindeer. My holiday decorations these days is condensed to strings of white fairy lights. I leave them on 24-7 because this time of year, it gets dark early and they cast a soft, friendly light. I have them in the living room and our bedroom and even the bathroom where they make the perfect nightlight.

I hope my son and daughter-in-law won't feel shortchanged by our smaller, simpler Christmas. There will still be pancakes Christmas morning, and there will be roast beef, if not prime rib. A great gift my friend gave me the other night after we'd demolished the pizza was emotional support and permission to skip the Yorkshire pudding.

"It's so bad for you and makes such a mess," she said.

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