



MESSAGE IN A {WATER} BOTTLE



Artwork takes new forms in Cannon Beach

By KATHERINE LACAZE
For Cannon Beach Gazette

In the words of regional artist Pooka Rice, “art is the best way to facilitate messages.” During a Feb. 22 workshop, she showed a handful of participants what that means by demonstrating how to integrate bits of recycled beach plastic into a collection of attractive paintings that communicated a strong message of ocean stewardship and environmental protection — “art that tells a story,” as Rice put it.

The workshop, held at the Cannon Beach History Center and Museum, was offered as part of the Haystack Rock Awareness Program and Cannon Beach Arts Association’s collaborative Environmental Art Series: Trash Talk Art Workshops.

The arts association, whose mission includes education, received funding from the Oregon Coast Visitors Association to help offer the workshops at a lower cost, making them more accessible to the public, said Meagan Sokol, arts education director.

From trash to treasure

The mammoth issue of plastic pollution negatively impacting beaches, bodies of water, and marine life in general is not unique to Cannon Beach, but there is no better place for people to contribute to mitigating the problem than in their own community, said Rice, who is also HRAP’s outreach coordinator.

“If we all work together and do our part, we can impact it,” she added.

Cannon Beach’s iconic Haystack Rock is protected under the Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge and as a Marine Garden. HRAP is dedicated to preserving the site’s natural resources, including the intertidal and bird ecology, primarily through education, such as citizen science and stewardship programs that draw locals and visitors alike.

In the course of pursuing that mission, bringing awareness to the plastic problem has surfaced as a key component. Microplastics are permeating various levels of the food web and causing widespread damage. For example, the bright colors of the plastic pieces attract wildlife, meaning “we’re giving them junk food — literally,” Rice said.

Art for all

While the bouquet of multicolored plastics and other debris is harmful to marine life, it can be reframed into an interesting and alluring art material, as Rice demonstrated at the workshop.

See Plastic, Page A7

PLASTIC POLLUTION

‘IF WE ALL WORK TOGETHER AND DO OUR PART, WE CAN IMPACT IT.’

Pooka Rice, artist and HRAP outreach coordinator



Katherine Lacaze

Artist Pooka Rice demonstrates how to incorporate plastic marine debris into beautiful artwork during an environmental art workshop. As the outreach coordinator for the Haystack Rock Awareness Program, she is heavily invested in protecting marine ecology and the natural resources in the area.

Comp plan revision ahead

Will it be a touch-up or fresh start?

By CARA MICO
For Cannon Beach Gazette

Housing, emergency management, forefund management, arts and culture stand at the city’s goals list developed at the council’s annual December retreat.

Among takeaways was the need for a strategic plan to help organize the many priorities into something that staff can work with. Whether the council will start from scratch or revise the current plan was the topic of a Feb. 19 council work session.

St. Denis said he wants to focus on a visioning process first so that the city can “better scope” projects within the plan. Some council members said they preferred to review and update the current plan rather than start from scratch.

Projects, including relocation of City Hall and the police station, “will have a lot of moving parts,” councilor Brandon Ogilvie added. A strategic plan could help “see how it all fits in.”

Mayor Sam Steidel said “hell no” to a new strategic plan, a process undertaken in 2016. “I’d much rather look at the comprehensive plan.”

See Plan, Page A7

Hiring decision could be near for new superintendent

By R.J. MARX
Cannon Beach Gazette

Members of the public had the opportunity to meet Seaside School District assistant superintendent candidate Susan Penrod Monday at a meet-and-greet at the high school.

Penrod, K–12 curriculum administrator at the Eugene School District, toured school facilities, met community leaders and visited with the public in a day of introductions.

Superintendent Sheila Roley, who said she plans to step down in winter 2020-21 school year, said Penrod could fulfill the superintendent’s role after her retirement.

“Roles will transition over time,” Roley said.

Penrod is one of 23 candidates and five assistant superintendent finalists, Roley said.

“We see in a Susan a lot of things we’re looking for in a superintendent.”

A Willamette University graduate, Penrod’s experience include pre-k work, career and technical education experience, and educational jobs throughout the state.

Married and the parent of two, Penrod said the North Coast was a big draw.

“We’ve been coming here many years and enjoy and all that you have to offer here,” she said. “So when I saw this position open, I thought what a great opportunity to combine where I like to vacation with where I would like to work.”

See Hiring, Page A7

Chamber celebrates 50 years at awards ceremony

By R.J. MARX
Cannon Beach Gazette

In 1969, Chamber of Commerce president Richard Atherton asked board members to suggest future goals for Cannon Beach. Suggestions included paint up and clean up, keep vacant lots and streets from rubbish. The majority was for preserving natural beauty and retaining a village atmosphere. Planning for a swimming pool was suggested.

Fifty years later, the chamber celebrated its 50th year with the membership awards ceremony at the Chamber Community Hall.

The chamber is focusing on a year-round audience, chamber president Greg Swedenborg, not just the three summer months, a theme continued throughout the evening. Along with sustainability and a sense of environmental responsibility, the chamber presented a message of “love it like a local.”

The chamber’s executive director Jim Paino paid tribute to chamber members new and old. He introduced a program designed to partner newer members to network and to “get acclimated to Cannon Beach. It’s such

See Chamber, Page A7



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

James Paino, executive director of the Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce, addresses the crowd at the annual awards banquet.