

Side Rail JON RAHL

Partnerships vital to tourism success in Seaside

Throughout my life I've participated in a lot of team sports and group activities. Whether it was ultra-competitive or just for fun, it feels good contributing to a collaborative effort. The same is often true in the tourism world. Individually, we can be really strong with our efforts, but collaboratively our performance can be enhanced when we have multiple organizations (think of them as team members) working towards a common goal.

I've seen this very type of collaboration and partnership work extremely well in the tourism industry. Not only at the local and regional level but also at the state level. A perfect example of that is happening right now with Travel Oregon and their brilliantly

orchestrated "7 Wonders of Oregon" campaign. If you aren't familiar with the campaign, please Google "7 Wonders of Oregon" and start planning your excursions now.

If you are familiar, you likely know that the next phase of this campaign involves giving away regionally-inspired bikes near or within each of the "wonders" being promoted. These bikes have been designed, built and soon will be hidden with the help of partners all across the state. A campaign of this magnitude would simply not be possible without all of these individuals working together. And the tourism industry statewide is reaping the rewards of these efforts.

Locally, the Visitors Bureau has engaged in sim-



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ilar types of partnerships with our two membership organizations, the Seaside Chamber of Commerce and Seaside Downtown Development Association. Individually, we all have goals, objectives and strategies, but together we are amplifying the voice of

Seaside tourism, business and event promotion for a common goal: improving the area economy. As we prepare for the summer season, don't forget you have partners in this community who want success just like you do. And they are often just a phone call away for help and future collaboration. This type of mentality is vital towards continued success.

Transient Room Tax numbers: Analysis of data and numbers is a big part of what I'm involved with as we plan projects, and recap what we've done. The most critical number that drives our budget is transient room tax collections (also referred to as TRT or bed tax). And for the 13th consecutive quarter, Seaside bed tax has ex-

perienced year-over-year growth. For the quarter ending March 31, Seaside's bed tax experienced a 30 percent increase (yes, you read that correctly) over the same time period in 2014 — which happened to be a record at the time. Fiscal-year-to-date, Seaside is up about 12 percent over the same time period.

Oregon's North Coast update: The spring portion of our Oregon's North Coast promotion (our collaborative effort with the Astoria-Warrenton and Cannon Beach Chambers of Commerce) is wrapping up this month with digital video advertisements running through May. Since February (with a break during the March Spring Break time period), we've targeted ads towards potential travelers

in Portland (55 percent of all ads), Seattle (35 percent of all ads) and Vancouver, B.C. (10 percent of all ads).

In April, those targeted ads included an opportunity to win a week on Oregon's North Coast. The three-week contest generated nearly 6,400 entries. Of those, about 25 percent said they wanted more information from us on a regular basis, a really strong option rate and a group we can now regularly market to.

Have a thought or a question about tourism in Seaside, or maybe an idea for a future column? Drop me an email at jon@seasideor.com. Jon Rahl is the director of tourism for the Seaside Visitors Bureau and assistant general manager of the Seaside Civic & Convention Center.

Letters to the Editor

No pot shops

Open letter to Seaside City Council: To me, there is no good reason to allow marijuana dispensaries in the downtown core of Seaside. Broadway should be off limits, since there are many other locations that could be used without making it so visible to family visitors to Seaside. This is a tourist town, and we have no medical clinics in the downtown corridor.

As far as I am concerned there does not need to be one here at all, but that has already been decided for some unknown reason. Pot — really, why do we need to find another reason to make people stupid? Granted, there is lots of money involved, so that must be the reason. Money talks.

Being under the influence does make you out of your mind. It may dull the pain, but many of these folks do not take it for the pain, but to just dull their mind. There may be medical reasons to take it, but even more just do it to get high.

So we let the medical shops open, and then the recreational shops follow shortly. There are

studies at colleges about all the harm pot is doing to the grades of the students. They cannot concentrate or retain anything in their pot-filled minds. Colorado businesses are complaining about their employees not doing their jobs, or even showing up for work, due to the excess pot use.

I realize there is nothing I can say or do about this, but being a downtown business owner, I feel I should at least be listened to. Please don't hurt our reputation by allowing pot shops in the downtown. We are already looked down upon for stuff that has happened in our past. Don't let pot shops in the downtown add to that reputation.

M. DIEBOLT
Seaside

Friends are great

Friendship is a good thing to have in any school you go to. It's nice to have friends around who care for you, people to talk to is really nice to have, too, and when you have friends you create amazing memories together and bond together. It's a good thing to have loyal friends whom you can trust.

Friends who will have your back no matter what happens. To have friends who love you through thick and thin.

In school it's nice to have someone who understands you. It's a good thing to have a friend who doesn't judge you for either mistakes you made, or things you have done. To find a friend who doesn't judge you will be the long-lasting friend for you.

A friend who understands you still can judge you. It just means they will be nice to you about it, but to have both is really nice to have. Friends who like you for who you are and not because you're rich, or have something they want, is a loyal friend — someone who has fun hanging out with you, and enjoys your presence.

In friendship you have someone to talk to. Friends will help you. When you want someone to talk to, they will be there. When you have friends you can talk about anything the both of you want to talk about. You can talk about boys or girls that you like or have a crush on. Or, you guys could talk about plans in the fu-

ture you guys are going to do together like camp, sleepovers, parties and going to fun parks.

Some types of friends like to gossip with one another, either about boys they like, boys they don't really like, girls they like, girls they don't like, celebrities they like or movies coming out. Some cool friends like to talk about new clothes or shopping.

When you have friends you create memories together that you can never forget in your life. They can be good or they can be bad. It is better if they are good ones, but you never know. You can have good memories by going on double dates with friends. Or going to the movies and having a really fun time. You can have good memories of camping with friends, too.

In this summary, I wrote about how friendship is a good thing to have in school, and really anywhere else. Friends are nice to have around. Having friends, you have people to talk to about. With friends you create memories together. Friends help friends out.

HOLLY WOOD
Broadway Middle School
Seaside

Green Thumb Plant Sale at Convention Center

The Seaside Sou'Wester Garden Club's Green Thumb Plant Sale will be held Saturday, May 30, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The garden club is presenting the sale at a new venue, the Seaside Civic and Convention Center. The public is invited and admission is free. Topics include final plans for the annual plant sale, Saturday, May 30, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the scholarship raffle at the Seaside Civic and Community Center.

The sale provides a wide variety of plants and other popular items. The silent auction will feature unique planters. There will be a choice of three raffle items to fund the scholarship program. Raffle tickets are available for \$1 each or six for \$5.

Summer Reading 2015 Every Hero has a Story!



Summer Reading Kick-off Parties

Saturday, June 6th
10 am - Warrenton Community Library
503-861-3919

Saturday, June 13th
10:30 am - Astoria Public Library
503-325-7323 www.astorialibrary.org

11:30 am - Seaside Public Library
503-738-6742 www.seasidelibrary.org

Contact your local library to learn about weekly summer programs (birth-teen).
Weekly programs also offered at
Jewell School 503-755-2451
Hilda Lahti Elementary 503-458-6162

Ask about free library cards for kids!

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