

New Seaside smartphone app a perfect tool for all

A little over seven years have passed (July 11, 2008 to be exact) since the iPhone 3G launched and consumers started embracing (or ignoring — depending on your view) a world full of apps (short for applications). In 2009, Apple’s promotion of the iPhone included the phrase, “there’s an app for that,” when touting how much its popular device could handle, and use of the phrase became standard in pop culture.

After more than 100 billion app downloads (according to an Apple report in June of this year) for more than 1.4 million apps, I think we’d be hard pressed to find something that an app hadn’t been created for. It’s not just Apple either. Google Play, original-

ly the Android Market, is a little over six-and-half-years-old and supports about the same number of apps.

Four years ago, Seaside took its first step into the world of apps. Led by the trail development of Seaside Naturally, at the time a Seaside Chamber of Commerce project, the app was designed to showcase the abundance of trails and bird-watching in the area. The app did pretty well, but we lost the ability to update information, and it slowly faded into the digital abyss.

Now, after a lot of analysis and continual thinking about the best way to get information to the public, we’ve launched a new app designed to be a quick, go-to source for both visitors and locals.



JON RAHL

The application is not meant to be a replacement for our website or the other ways we interact with folks. Our e-newsletters, text offers and partner programs will continue to be used. What the app does is offer our most popular

and engaging content in a condensed and very clean format. Tide tables, upcoming events, Seaside history and even a “Deals” section are quickly accessible using the app.

One of the most exciting features is our Audio Walking Tour, packaged nicely into six stops, with an accompanying map and in-app access to six video teasers of the historic locations. Click on the map view and you’ll see your current location mixed amongst six red dots. Those dots indicate the location where each audio tour takes place.

Also included are a list of all the lodging establishments, places to eat and ways to “See Seaside” (On the Ground, On the Water, On Wheels, From Above and With a License). A number of



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A new app opens a window into the world of Seaside.

these categories are still being populated with content, but we believe we are well on our way to a nice companion piece to our website. I envision locals being drawn to it as much as visitors since I

regularly get asked, by locals, where the best place to get a list of events is. The app also features push notifications, giving us the ability to let businesses offer something special and then “push” it out to those with the app installed.

You can download your own copy by visiting the Apple App or Google Play stores and searching “Seaside, Oregon.”

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

A bypass would help, not hurt

Open letter to the Seaside City Council, the Seaside Planning Department, the Seaside Downtown Business Association, the Seaside Chamber of Commerce, Clatsop County, and the Oregon Department of Transportation: Shame on you. You have consistently abused the very people who supply the income for the city.

The primary source of money for the city of Seaside is the tourist, most of whom travel over U.S. Highways 26 and 101 to bring their cash to you. I live about three miles out on Highway 26, or seven miles from the center of Seaside. On any given holiday weekend, or when a special event is happening in the area, traffic gets backed-up all the way out past my house. I just experienced the back-up first hand, trying to get from Astoria to my home, it took over 2.5 hours to get from

the Great Wall restaurant in Gearhart to my house, a total of about 10 miles.

To the best of my knowledge, there is currently no plan, or even discussion, of building a bypass east of Seaside so that the people who wish to get to Fort Stevens, Long Beach, Wash., or other points beyond Seaside, can avoid the horrendous gridlock.

I have heard some local business people say that they want the extra traffic. Trust me; people who are stuck in a lineup, literally for hours, are not going to stop at your place of business, unless that is their primary destination. I can imagine the family emotional atmosphere, after they have endured two miles per hour travel for an hour or two.

Several years ago they built a bypass around downtown Cannon Beach. That town is flourishing. Is there really a logical reason that there is not at least a design on the drawing board to build a new highway, east of Sea-

side, with three to four access exits to the city?

I do not live within the city limits of Seaside, so I have no say in your planning, but it amazes me how poorly you continually treat the tourists traveling to and through your city.

**Cleve Rolfe
Seaside**

Help to keep beaches clean

To the editor,
I will start this letter to let people know I love my small town of Seaside. We moved here from the valley two years ago and we do not regret the decision.

What is bothering me is the litter that happens in this town. Cigarette butts everywhere — dog doo on sidewalks and garbage on the beach. I am not going to blame the tourists for all of it. This happens in the winter months too. I will see my neighbors throw their cigarette butts down and their dogs poop in front of my house.

I don’t know what to do to help this situation but I hope that some people will read this and do their part to help keep this wonderful town clean!

Thank you for reading this. Let’s all strive to keep Seaside clean!

**Lisa Lawson
Seaside**

We need better infrastructure

Anyone who lives on the North Coast should have been embarrassed by the six-hour Fourth of July electrical power failure at the Pacific Power substation in Seaside. Clatsop County is a remote island where Pacific Power (a major producer of electricity generated in Wyoming from coal) provides electrical service. The Pacific Power Clatsop service district is surrounded by public utility districts supplying electricity generated from reliable renewable sources in Tillamook and Clatskanie that result not

only in lower consumer cost but significant reductions in greenhouse gas. Evidently the Seaside substation transformer failure was caused by a brazen red, white and blue balloon attack. Come on girls and guys, we need a better-designed utility infrastructure.

Millersburg Oregon, a small town in the Willamette Valley of 1,500 residents has — as of May 18 — completed its final business plan to break away from Pacific Power and form a municipal utility to reduce consumer costs. They found that there are currently 12 municipal utilities operating in Oregon, all of which have electric rates lower than Pacific Power.

Possibly if the Seaside City Council or the Clatsop County Commissioners could find the time, when they are not too busy regulating panhandlers and marijuana store locations, they might actually be able to do something to improve the lives of residents and

visitors as well as the viability of businesses. Properly designed, a local electrical utility could use renewable energy and eliminate the three- to six-month electrical outage that is projected for our area by the state when the Cascadia Fault earthquake and tsunami occurs. It might also survive in the case of a balloon attack.

**John Dunzer
Seaside**

Time to clean up downtown

What is going on in Seaside this summer? No one seems to be sweeping the sidewalks. I have never seen so many cigarette butts and so much litter downtown.

I have picked up lots of litter myself and I sweep in front of the business where I work, because I never see anyone else doing it.

I have never seen Seaside sidewalks so messy before. It’s a real shame!

**Jorjett Strumme
Seaside**

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