



## Decision delayed as state ruling stalls barn dispute

**A land use board ruling could have an impact in Gearhart case**

By R.J. Marx  
Seaside Signal

Marcia Harper of Seaside was called as a witness to Gearhart Municipal Court Monday night. She described a meeting with Neacoxie Barn owner Shannon Smith in which she sought a location for her grandson's wedding.

Drawn by its nearby local and wide range of services, she contacted Smith. Rental of the barn for the event would cost a donation of \$2,400, she was told. As a North Coast resident, Harper could receive the "local rate" of \$2,100.

"Suppose I wanted to make a smaller donation, say, \$50?" Harper said she told Smith. "She said, 'That would not be acceptable.'"

The city presented Judge John Orr with evidence this and other recent events indicate the barn is being

used illegally as a special event hall.

But complexities of a Land Use Board of Appeals ruling in April muddled the four-and-one-half-hour court session and left a final decision weeks away.

**Internet site, barter wedding deals**

For years Smith and the city have been at odds over what the city says is the nonpermitted commercial use of the barn. Monday's hearing was only the latest in a round of court dates



R.J. MARX  
**Shannon Smith after Monday's court hearing.**

and council meetings roiling the city.

City officials say Smith continues to host special

events and gatherings despite a lack of an active conditional use permit allowing commercial activities. After Smith was ticketed for using her barn for two weddings held this summer, she contested the \$500 citations, pleading not guilty to the charges and bringing the case to municipal court for hearing.

City manager Chad Sweet testified the website Neacoxiebarn.org listed the barn as "a place for your events," including corporate events, catering, and

more — advertising about six events per month, with a photo gallery of past events.

Police Chief Jeff Bowman and Officer Ian Brown shared observations before the court on the nights in question, June 20 and Aug. 7. Brown estimated he saw at least 50 people at the Neacoxie Barn, although a beach use permit from the same wedding party indicated the number of guests could have been as high as 150.

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## Seaside sees big jump in lodging tax revenues

**Second quarter of 2015 finishes 25 percent ahead of the same quarter in 2014**

By Katherine Lacaze  
Seaside Signal

Increased occupancy and higher average room rates helped Seaside "see numbers we've never seen before" of bed tax revenue, according to Seaside Director of Tourism Marketing Jon Rahl. Most of those funds will be designated for future tourism promotion, with the rest headed for public safety and city improvements.

While Seaside City Manager Mark Winstanley does "an excellent job" forecasting and makes revenue adjustments to anticipate how bed tax is trending, "we still blew those numbers out of the water," Rahl said.

The city's transient lodging tax revenue for the first quarter of 2015 — through March — was \$679,800, an increase of 29.2 percent over the first quarter of 2014, which brought in \$526,164. For the second quarter, the revenue in 2015 was just over \$1 million, compared to closer to \$800,000 in the second quarter of 2014, an increase of 25.28 percent.

"It's just indicative of how well everything has been going in terms of putting heads in beds, because even the best forecast couldn't have foreseen a 25 percent increase when last year was a record in and of itself," Rahl said.

The tax rate in Seaside has remained at 8 percent since Oct. 1, 2002. Steady increases in both total occupancy and room rate are contributing to the higher revenue numbers, Rahl said.

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KATHERINE LACAZE/SEASIDE SIGNAL

**Andrew Sarkady, a manager at Mo's Restaurant in Cannon Beach, poses with Seaside Heights Elementary School first-graders (from left) Aasha Slot, Isair Leon Mejia, Layla Larsen, Oscar Acuna, Eli Meeks and Kevin Garcia. Sarkady delivered about \$1,100 worth of school supplies.**

## Seaside Heights gets big donation

*Elementary school supplies for new year chipped in by Mo's Restaurant in Cannon Beach*

By Katherine Lacaze  
Seaside Signal

Mo's Restaurant in Cannon Beach helped Seaside Heights Elementary School stock up for the 2015-16 school year with a large donation of school supplies, from glittery glue and sidewalk chalk to reams of multi-purpose paper.

School started Sept. 8 for first- through fifth-grade students at Seaside Heights. The

following day, the students got a special delivery.

Andrew Sarkady, a manager at the Cannon Beach Mo's, dropped off about \$1,100 worth of school supplies, purchased as part of the regional restaurant chain's "Motivation For Kids" promotion.

For the month of July and August, Table 26 at the restaurant got a special designation. Approximately 10 percent of the overall sales made at the table in the two months — or \$11,000 — went toward school supplies for Seaside Heights. The restaurant previously has done the promotion for other organizations, charities and institutions that serve children, in addition to the chain's annual Fish and Chips for Firefighters fundraiser.

Principal Sande Brown said she was incredulous when she got a call from Sarkady asking how \$1,100 could best be used to meet the school's needs. The school got smaller donations of supplies for the 2015-16 school year, but the gift from Mo's "is a big one," she said.

"This fills the gap," she said.

The day before making the delivery, Sarkady went to Fred Meyer to purchase crayons, pencils, chalk, glue, construction paper, kids' paint, tape dispensers, multi-purpose paper, colored pencils and more.

"I'm not going to lie, I had fun doing it," he said. Brown said the supplies will be distributed among the different teachers and classrooms depending on what they need.

**The gift from Mo's 'is a big one. This fills the gap.'**

**Principal Sande Brown**

## Only one shark would do that: a great white

By Dani Palmer  
EO Media Group

Harbor seals, a sea lion and a striped dolphin all met the same fate over a one-month period off the North Coast. The animals were found dead from shark bites on Clatsop County beaches, prompting the Seaside Aquarium and lifeguards to post and share warnings with surfers.

While sharks are fairly common in local waters, it is unusual to see so many adult marine mammals bitten and on the shore in such a short timespan, aquarium administrative assistant Tiffany Boothe said.

Since Aug. 11 the Northern Oregon/Southern Washington Marine Mammal Stranding Network has responded to two adult harbor

seals, one adult Steller sea lion and a 7-foot striped dolphin, all believed to be close to shore when attacked. None of the animals survived.

"There's only one shark that would do that: a great white," said Jim Burke, director of animal husbandry at the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport.

While other sharks go for smaller prey, particularly young marine mammals, great whites stalk larger sea creatures. They are considered "ambush animals" because of the way they attack from beneath their prey, he said.

The first dead harbor seal was found on Del Rey Beach near Gearhart, along with a seal pup in Klipsan Beach, Wash., that appeared to have "narrowly escaped



OLYMPUS DIGITAL CAMERA

a shark attack," on Aug. 11, Boothe said.

On July 27, a seal pup at Barview in Tillamook County also appeared to have es-

caped an attack, she added. Both had superficial flipper wounds.

The majority of the dead animals were found on Gear-

hart beaches, including a harbor seal Sept. 4. The dolphin was discovered near Fort Stevens Sept. 6.

Two of the animals came ashore still alive, which caused researchers to believe the mammals were attacked within the surf zone. Boothe said animals with shark bites are found often, but usually in a state of decay after floating for a long time.

Burke noted sharks are seen or encountered throughout the year, especially in late summer or fall fishing season. The marine mammals follow the fish, and the sharks follow them.

"The marine mammal populations are extremely healthy right now," he said. "The predators will follow."

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