

Aquatic facility to see major remake

SKY BOX
SKYLER ARCHIBALD



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The pool will close Oct. 20-Dec. 4 for renovations.

I feel fortunate each day to work in a beautiful facility with amazing people. It gives me great energy every time that I walk through the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Natatorium, featuring a beautiful lap pool, warm-water learner pool and spa. This month, our aquatic facility will shut down for a major renovation. The main pool, more than 30 years old, needs to be replastered. This is a major construction project!

The district has worked hard on informing our members and regular patrons about the upcoming closure and are offering several options for continuing memberships during that time. For more information on those options, please contact the pool front desk at 503-738-3311.

In the meantime, I want to thank the foresight and uphill slog that the founding members of the district had and endured to see the construction of the pool through. There many in the community who recognized the great need for a public pool to help educate both children and adults and teach important water safety skills. Those individuals worked hard to convince the naysayers to both create the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District — nearly 50 years ago — and construct the Sunset Pool.

Since its construction, the pool has served an important role in education and recreation in South Clatsop County. Growing up here, I remember swim lessons, school swim lessons, birthday parties and coming swimming on Wednesday nights with my Scout troop. Now as a grown adult, I've seen my own two children flourish and gain confidence after learning to swim here!

In 2016, the district served 944 children through our swim lesson program and we expect that number to increase in 2017! Our school swim lesson program serves children from Jewell, Warrenton and three of the schools in the Seaside School District. We're home to the Seaside Swim Team, a youth team full of roughly 25 dedicated swimmers. The Sunset Pool is also the home for the Seaside High School swim team.

But youth and children aren't the only population we serve! There are hundreds of dedicated lap swimmers in our community that blow my mind each time with their athleticism, speed and stamina in swimming the pool, often several times a week. We offer 20 water fitness classes per week as well, appealing to a broad audience to try something fun and new in the comfort of the warm water pool. Our local hospital uses the magical healing power of water to help individuals rehabilitate after having surgery. It is truly a terrific place where miracles and amazing things happen every day!

This is all sounding like a commercial for my employer and the pool. However, my point is different. Go back 50 years to the formation of SEPRD and the early reflections of building a pool in this community. The population of Seaside during those early years was likely somewhere around 4,000, a number significantly smaller than our population today!

Did those recreation pioneers have a vision of what was to come? Could they possibly have understood the impact that their decisions and actions would have on this community?

I am thankful for those dedicated individuals and for the members of our community that continue to believe in our district and our programs. While we apologize for the inconvenience that the closure may have, we feel it is a small price to pay, for having a wonderfully resurfaced pool when we reopen on Monday, Dec. 4!

Skyler Archibald is the executive director of the Sunset Empire Park & Recreation District

LETTERS

Letters from Page 4A

(predominantly out-of-state) owners and vacation rental agencies have now resorted to a public referendum, Measure 4-188, to repeal and replace the law, forcing a vote of the people in November. If Gearhart wants to save itself and uphold its current city law, the vote against Measure 4-188 must be not just successful, but overwhelmingly successful. It's a vote that matters, not one that can be skipped. Otherwise, moneyed interests will continue to pose an existential threat to the community.

Ironically, one of the group spearheading the drive for Measure 4-188 is a member of the Clatsop County Commission, a public body supposedly committed to finding solutions for the current housing crisis. Let's hope that this anomaly doesn't reflect the position of a majority of commissioners, and that Clatsop County will, like Gearhart, take action to limit the scourge of short-term rentals.

Bill Berg
Gearhart

Vote yes to reasonably regulate

Vote yes on ballot Measure 4-188 to reasonably regulate Gearhart vacation rentals. Contrary to representations made by Gearhart citizens, and even its mayor, vacation rentals will still be regulated for safety issues and septic issues under Measure 4-188.

The measure requires home inspections by licensed home inspectors. Licensing is regulated by the state of Oregon. Ballot Measure 4-188 simply allows the vacation rental applicant to choose a licensed home inspector. Additionally, Gearhart didn't get overrun with vacation rentals in the first 100 years of unregulated vacation rentals, and it won't in the second 100 years.

The city, with all its lengthy research at taxpayer expense, during 2015-2016 didn't identify any more rentals than eventually applied for permits by the October 2016 deadline — only 84 out of 1,600 homes.

Over-restrictive vacation rental ordinances will force rental homeowners underground. Many cities along

the Oregon coast, across Oregon and the U.S. regulate vacation rentals, even Las Vegas, a city from which some very new Gearhart citizens fled, allegedly due to vacation rentals.

Ordinances are only as good as the ability to enforce them. The city has failed to regularly and consistently enforce its existing ordinances regulating garbage, septic, parking and appearance of properties, and now its increasing its responsibility to regulate an ordinance that is misguided and over-reaches. Measure 4-188 will be more manageable, requiring enforcement of existing ordinances and adding enough additional regulation to preserve homeowners' rights and balance the interest in public safety.

I helped draft ballot Measure 4-188, and I'd be delighted to talk with anyone to go over a line-by-line comparison of the city's ordinance and Measure 4-188. Make the best choice for Gearhart by voting in favor of Measure 4-188.

Katherine Schroeder
Gearhart

Current ordinance is fair

I am in favor of safe, fair and reasonable regulation of short-term rentals in Gearhart. That is why I am voting no on ballot Measure 4-188 this November. I believe the STR Ordinance, unanimously passed by the Gearhart City Council, is fair in every way. Fair means open, transparent conversations followed by decision-making based on the needs and desires of the community. Fair means copious research, acquisition of factual information, communication, listening, compromising, evaluating, monitoring and tweaking. Fair means upholding Gearhart's comprehensive plan by retaining a low density residential community while allowing all current STR owners the opportunity to continue to rent their homes safely, fairly and uniformly. The current STR ordinance meets all these criteria.

In contrast, Measure 4-188 is not safe, fair or reasonable. It is not safe to have an unlimited number of renters 12 years of age or less. It is unreasonable to assume unlimited numbers of youths and children have a lesser impact on a septic system. It is not fair for Gearhart taxpayers to foot a nearly \$10,000 special election bill. Finally, it is not fair or reasonable for the two chief petitioners to compromise the safety, livability and taxpayers' money so their children can afford to keep a family home by renting their inherited "gift" to transient visitors.

Know all your facts so you can vote reasonably and fairly.

Sue Lorain
Gearhart

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MEETINGS

- Tuesday, Oct. 17**
Seaside School District Board of Directors, 6 p.m., 1801 S. Franklin, Seaside.
Seaside Planning Commission, work session, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
- Wednesday, Oct. 18**
Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., 989 Broadway.
- Thursday, Oct. 19**
Seaside Transportation Advisory Committee, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
- Wednesday, Nov. 1**
Seaside Improvement Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
- Gearhart City Council**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 698 Pacific Way.
- Tuesday, Nov. 7**
Community and Senior Center Commission, 10:30 a.m., 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.
- Seaside Library Board**, 4:30 p.m., 1131 Broadway, Seaside.
- Seaside Planning Commission**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
- Thursday, Nov. 9**
Seaside Convention Center Commission, 5 p.m., 415 First Avenue.
- Monday, Nov. 13**
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
- Wednesday, Nov. 15**
Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., 989 Broadway.
- Thursday, Nov. 16**
Seaside Tree Board, 4 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.
- Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

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