

# Inspired by my parents, looking ahead to a new year

Growing up, and even well into adulthood, I never imagined penning my own column. In retrospect, I had some help along the way. My dad would bring the sports section into my bedroom to get me up on Sunday mornings while my mom taught English and creative writing at my local high school for 30 years. Reading and writing were very important to them and in the past two-and-a-half years, I've lost them both.

Yet, with loss, comes remembrance and I think about the little things they did for me, my sister and our families quite often. When I sit down to write this column, it's thoughts of them instilling in me the value of the written word. Mom, always telling me I could write well. Dad, understanding what I really liked to read, and fostering that good habit.

As we tie a bow on one year and welcome a new one, reflection is common. It's healthy and important. I love that it draws me closer to my

**SIDE RAIL**  
JON RAHL



folks. I also love that it allows us to recap accomplishments and plan for the future. With that, here's year seven of my look back and glimpse ahead. Happy New Year, Seaside!

## Convention Center expansion

In 2016 it became an official project. In 2017, we hired a project manager, architect and local construction company to push the needle further. Schematic and design development have been the tasks at hand for the past six months and are coming to a quick close. Construction is expected to begin this spring. Follow the project at [seasideconvention.com/renovations](http://seasideconvention.com/renovations).

## Growth at the visitor information center

One of my favorite projects this past year was engaging with Seaside High School and shop teacher Jeff Corliss to have them help us build an oversized Adirondack chair. Thirty students drafted, crafted and painted the furniture art that now adorns the front lawn of the visitors center. It's already produced countless photo ops and spiked traffic into our info center.

## New video assets to promote Seaside

Thanks in part to a grant from Clatsop County, we earmarked funds to create a series of how-to videos that tell people just how easy it is to visit and play in Seaside. Production yielded four videos in May and two in September. Advertising with three of the spots followed in the fall and more will come this spring.

Watch them all at [seasideor.com/seaside-stories](http://seasideor.com/seaside-stories).

## Even more video ahead

Our Facebook page, Visit Seaside OR, took a stab at Facebook Live during the final half of 2017. You'll see more of that and then some this year. With our tagline, "It's Easy to Seaside," as the guiding light, we envision more spontaneous and entertaining storytelling that shows people how and where to enjoy this coastal wonderland. Watch at [facebook.com/VisitSeasideOR](http://facebook.com/VisitSeasideOR).

## Destination management

Are we at a crossroads with tourism? One in three jobs in Seaside is tied to leisure and hospitality. It's beyond vital to our community. Yet, we need to ask if there's a breaking point. Generations have visited Oregon's North Coast and we want generations beyond to enjoy the

same benefit. An Oregon Sustainability Studio is already established on this topic for our area and that's an important first step.

## Signage and wayfinding

It's been two years in the making, but new town entry signs will greet locals and visitors arriving from the north and south by early January. The goal was to create a more inviting and inspiring welcome message, evoking the bright colors that reflect our 2015 rebranding efforts. Visitor Center signage and downtown wayfinding is the next item we'll look at to create even stronger brand unification in 2018.

*Have a thought or a question about tourism in Seaside, or maybe an idea for a future column? Drop an email to [jrahl@cityofseaside.us](mailto:jrahl@cityofseaside.us). Jon Rahl is the director of tourism for the Seaside Visitors Bureau and assistant general manager of the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.*

# Looking ahead in 2018 as city undertakes major development

Seaside Signal

For a city the size of Seaside, the community undertook major steps in building, development and rehabilitation in 2017. With the passage of the \$99.7 million bond for a new school campus approved by voters in November 2016, the starting gun was fired and a process that will stretch at least until fall 2020 and the schools' projected opening began.

At the same time, a multi-million dollar renovation and expansion was approved by the City Council, to be paid for by an increase in the city's room tax, from 8 percent to 10 percent. Bonds for the project went out for sale in November.

The third major project in the city is the establishment of an urban renewal area in parts of southeast Seaside. The plan, which uses tax increment financing — not bonds or property tax hikes — could help the city improve bridges and schools.

And more building could be on the horizon. The Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District is in the midst of the Bob Chisholm Community Refresh — delayed by high bids to improve acoustics and upgrade main areas. Discussions on a future renovation of the rec center by the district are ongoing, and with the phasing out of Seaside High School, Broadway Middle School and the South Franklin administrative building, out-of-the-box possibilities could be ahead.

## Urban renewal

Covering almost 560 acres of land along South Holladay, Avenue S from U.S. Highway 101 east and the southern section of Highway 101, the Southeast Seaside Urban Renewal District makes up about 21 percent of the city's total acreage and 22 percent of Seaside's assessed value.

Projected funds of up to \$62.4 million — more if matched by state funds or grants — could help build bridges, add traffic enhancements and provide infrastructure needs for Seaside School District's new campus in the



COURTESY DOUG DOUGHERTY

Ground was cleared for the new Seaside School District campus over the summer. The new campus aims to provide seismic safety and sheltering capabilities.



SEASIDE CIVIC AND CONVENTION CENTER

Design plans for the remodeled convention center.

city's southeast hills.

Past urban renewal programs helped provide financing for The Turnaround and Prom, the city's sewage plant, 12th Avenue improvements and construction of a new library.

Urban renewal is a financing program authorized under state law and implemented locally that allows for the use of property tax revenues to grow the economy in blighted areas. Property taxes on the growth in assessed value in the urban renewal area are frozen and increases are allocated to the city's urban renewal agency and not city and county taxing districts. Subsequent improvements can lead to higher home values and in turn high-

er assessments, generating more funds for the urban renewal district. Funding comes through increases in assessed values of local properties.

Infrastructure goals include a pedestrian bike bridge, parks projects and upgrades to unincorporated properties in the area.

The urban renewal plan, adopted Aug. 29, sets a limit on the amount of money which can be used to fund projects, with a maximum indebtedness of \$68.5 million. The plan has a duration of 25 years.

Sale of the bonds now heads to the markets, with sales anticipated in February, City Manager Mark Winstanley said at the council's December meeting.

## School bond

In November 2016, Seaside voters passed a \$99.7 million bond to replace the district's aging and unsafe schools at risk in the Cascadia Subduction Zone, at risk for earthquake and tsunami.

With that, the starting gun was fired and a team assembled to bring the campus dream into reality.

In 2017, the school district went before Seaside City Council and the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners to achieve a needed expansion of the urban growth boundary. The 89-acre expansion included 49 acres designated as county forest and 40 acres designated as low-density residential. After consideration by the Planning Commission, the commission recommended adoption of zoning and ordinance changes to rezone the property as industry-commercial.

After the August recommendation, amendments to the city's comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance and zoning map were subsequently adopted by the City Council which in October. In November, the county Board of Commissioners adopted an ordinance amending the

county's comprehensive plan expanding Seaside's urban growth boundary to accommodate the new campus.

DAY CPM, a Beaverton-based owner's representative consulting firm, was contracted to administer construction management services on behalf of the district. In June, general contractor Hoffman Construction was named to the team.

In July, Weyerhaeuser Co. cleared trees on the hillside.

Land soil testing and surveys continued throughout the fall.

In December, the first schematics of the new project were delivered. The project's first schematics and drawings include interior renderings of the elementary, middle and high school campuses and maps of playing fields and outdoor spaces.

Architects anticipate the design phase to reach next June, when construction could begin. The campus is slated for opening in the fall of 2020.

## Convention Center

Spring of 2019. That's when Convention Center General Manager Russ Vandenberg hopes to have the convention center's \$15

million construction project complete. The rationale for the expansion is to meet the growing need to accommodate larger groups, provide state-of-the-art facilities and amenities.

Vandenberg and team successfully won approval for the improvements, to be financed by an increase in the city's lodging tax from 8 to 10 percent.

Changes include revamped entrances, new stairway locations and exterior improvements. The convention center, at nearly 46,000 square feet, will expand to more than 54,000 square feet, a net gain of about 19 percent. A complete exterior update will tie the additions together.

Lobby restrooms will be relocated to a portion of the current administrative area. A stairway will be moved and a reception or registration area added to the east side of the lobby. Administrative offices will be reconfigured, as will the concession area.

Portland-based Holst Architecture and Convergence Design of Kansas City, Missouri, will team with local architects O'Brien and Co. Construction to finalize design elements throughout the winter months.

## Phone and Internet Discounts Available to CenturyLink Customers

The Oregon Public Utility Commission designated CenturyLink as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier within its service area for universal service purposes. CenturyLink's basic local service rates for residential voice lines are \$15.80-\$17.80 per month and business services are \$28.00-\$32.00 per month. Specific rates will be provided upon request.

CenturyLink participates in a government benefit program (Lifeline) to make residential telephone or broadband service more affordable to eligible low-income individuals and families. Eligible customers are those that meet eligibility standards as defined by the FCC and state commissions. Residents who live on federally recognized Tribal Lands may qualify for additional Tribal benefits if they participate in certain additional federal eligibility programs. The Lifeline discount is available for only one telephone or qualifying broadband service per household, which can be either a wireline or wireless service. Broadband speeds must be 15 Mbps download and 2 Mbps upload or faster to qualify.

Lifeline discounts include a transfer restriction (port freeze). This means that you are unable to obtain the Lifeline discount on service with another provider for a period of time. The length of time depends on the services you purchase — 60 days for voice telephone service, 12 months for qualifying broadband service. Certain exceptions to the transfer restrictions may apply. See <http://www.lifelinesupport.org/lis/change-my-company.aspx> for more information.

A household is defined for the purposes of the Lifeline program as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline service is not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in the program. Consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain Lifeline telephone or broadband service can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from the program.

If you live in a CenturyLink service area, please call 1-888-833-9522 or visit [centurylink.com/lifeline](http://centurylink.com/lifeline) with questions or to request an application for the Lifeline program.



# Dem chair sees no clear replacement for Boone

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honor and privilege of serving as their state representative."

State Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, praised Boone for her focus on coastal constituents and issues.

"She has been the quintessential citizen legislator," Johnson said.

## New hopefuls

Tim Josi, a Democrat who served in the state House from 1991 to 1998, announced Tuesday he would not seek re-election to the Tillamook County Commission and would instead run for Boone's seat. He has been on the county commission since 1999.

"If elected, I would hit the ground running," Josi said in a news release. "Fortunately,



**Rep. Deborah Boone carries a resolution honoring Sgt. Jason Gooding. Boone announced her plan to retire in January 2019.**

FILE PHOTO

I know the legislative process very well through almost 30 years of experience. I also have a solid understanding of the issues and problems that we face at the local, regional, state and national levels. Most importantly, I have learned how to work collaboratively with both Democrats and Republicans to forge solutions that fit our needs and move us in a positive direction."

Boone, a longtime staffer in Salem, previously worked under Josi. He was also encouraged to run for the Legislature again by Johnson, who called him "an excellent public servant."

Brian Halvorsen, a community organizer who founded North Coast Progressives last year, filed as an independent in September. On his campaign site, Halvorsen took aim at the two-party sys-

tem and Boone's history. He struck a populist tone, listing among his campaign priorities lowering income inequality, increasing taxes on corporations and the wealthy, ending the use of fossil fuels in Oregon, reforming campaign financing and making education affordable.

Doug Thompson, chairman of the Clatsop County Democratic Central Committee, said he hopes for contested primary and general elections and sees no favorite to replace Boone. Jim Hoffman, chairman of the Clatsop County Republican Party Central Committee, said the party is still figuring out who will run, and might know next month.

The filing deadline is March 6.