

# A too-timely presentation

Safety plans were already in place in Santa Fe, Texas, when on Friday, May 18, a shooter killed 10 and injured 13, including an armed student resource officer.

According to the Washington Post, the school district had an active-shooter plan and two armed police officers walked the halls of the high school. School district leaders had even agreed last fall to eventually arm teachers and staff under the state's school marshal program.

Policies and procedures worked, J.R. "Rusty" Norman, the president of the Santa Fe school district's board of trustees, told reporters. "Having said that, the way things are, if someone wants to get into a school to create havoc, they can do it."

The timing, for Seaside, is chilling.

## 'Locks, lights, out of sight'

Three days earlier I listened to Seaside High School principal Jeff Roberts present the district's new safety plan to members of the district's board of directors.

"The fact that we have to have a conversation like this is incredibly unfortunate," Roberts said.

"Seaside High School's Safety Plan and What Students, Staff and Parents Need to Know" offers four responses to emergency situations: lockout, lockdown, evacuate and shelter. The plan, developed in conjunction with law enforcement and emergency planners, presents a "plain language response for any given scenario."

With years of preparation for the Big One — a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami — Seaside kids are well-versed in evacuation and shelter aspects of the plan. Students' "You can't stop this wave" campaign helped raise tsunami awareness throughout the community and spurred passage of the 2015 bond for a new campus in the Southeast Hills out of the inundation zone.

Drills for school lockdown and lockout scenarios are not as common.

Dangerous events in the community, or even a vicious dog on the playground, would be examples of incidents calling for a lockout response. Officials secure the perimeter, while students and staff "get inside and lock outside doors." For the most part, classes proceed as usual. Students may be required to remain in the building until the threat is mitigated.

The lockdown protocol is used when there is a threat inside the school building.

In a lockdown, "locks, lights, out of sight" is the mantra. Exterior doors remain open to allow access by first responders. Students are advised to move out of sight, maintain silence, keep interior doors shut and take attendance to account for anyone missing.

Communications are kept at a minimum. Cellphone ringers are silent, although students may text updates and information to parents or first responders. Inside doors are locked; outside doors remain open to allow entry for first responders.

If students can safely exit the building, they are advised to run.

If they cannot remove themselves from the situation, they should "fight any threat as a last resort," according to the

Student protocol for a "lockdown" scenario.

Protocol for a "lockout" scenario.

## SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



protocol.

"That sounds pretty awful for us to even have to talk about," Roberts said. "But we want them to know they have to do that."

## Security built-in

Significant changes in daily campus life are already well underway. "It's a little inconvenience now, but it's worth it," school board member Michelle Wunderlich said at the presentation.

High school doors formerly open are now locked; visitors are directed to the main west entrance to check into the main office. Staff or students are empowered to stop visitors and ask what they are doing in school.

New radios increase communication among the leadership team and main office personnel. All staff wear name badges. Emergency response information is posted in every classroom.

Seaside's new campus debuts in September 2020. Security is built into the design.

Each school will have a secure entry vestibule, according to project manager Jim Henry.

Visitors will be stopped, then buzzed into the office area to be assessed. Staff will use card keys for entry and push-button locks installed in the entries.

Entry vestibules will be fitted with either bullet-resistant ballistic glass or ballistic laminate.



MICHAEL CIAGLO/HOUSTON CHRONICLE VIA AP

**A woman prays in the grass outside the Alamo Gym where parents wait to reunite with their kids following a shooting at Santa Fe High School Friday, May 18, in Santa Fe, Texas.**

## For parents, visitors

This conversation goes well beyond students and staff. Parents and visitors can make a difference by discarding their preconceptions about what school was like when "they were growing up." It's changed.

Here are some other ways to keep our schools safer:

- When visiting the high school, use the main west entrance and sign in promptly.
- Familiarize yourself with the safety plan's four emergency protocols.
- Widen the conversation — look at how much this community has accomplished in drawing attention to tsunami awareness.
- Don't lose hope. Every student lost to a shooting is a human being — someone's child.



Maxwell and Sam in Los Angeles, circa 1990.

# The sound of children laughing

I recently remarked to a friend the pleasure I get living in a neighborhood where there are young kids.

"Not just kids on vacation," I said, "but kids who live here." Given the state of the world, it's easy enough to feel grim. So I look for bits of joy where I can. It's joyful to me to hear and see children playing. I'm a great candidate to live next door to a playground. True, young voices can be shrill. They can be loud. But hey, my husband plays the saxophone, which, depending on your mood, is noise or a joyful sound.

Prior to moving

to the Pacific Northwest, for 20-plus years we lived in a family neighborhood. It was a great town

to raise kids. On our street, the kids ranged in age from newborn infants to kids heading off to college. A great thing was there was always a responsible teenager around available for babysitting.

Some people object to living in close proximity to kids. That's why retirement communities were created. Some people don't care for the sound of raucous laughter, joyful screaming, or balls bounced into their yard. They say these sounds interrupt their reading or their peaceful gardening. They regard these sounds as noise.

Our first home in L.A. was an adorable, tiny cottage in Venice Beach with a fenced-in yard. The house had a second rental unit, an apartment over a detached garage. A guy in his 30s lived in it; he had to pass through the yard to get to the shared laundry, otherwise we were assured of the yard's exclusive use. So I was none too pleased within 24 hours of moving in, the man came over to tell me to keep my son indoors. "I cannot stand the sound of children laughing," he said warningly. I crossed my arms over my chest and said, "Not happening."

A few weeks later, my son asked if a little girl he liked at his preschool could come over. They played in the back yard which had grass and a little shaded area where I'd set up a child sized table and chairs for their snack. I'd just handed them juice boxes and oatmeal cookies before stepping inside to get dinner going. From the kitchen window, I could see the backyard. I wasn't inside two minutes when my son and his little friend appeared at the kitchen door. They were very excited.

"Mommy that man says he has a gun and he'll shoot us if we don't stop laughing," my son said.

I dropped the potato I was peeling and rushed outside. There was our neighbor, brandishing a pistol.

"I told you I cannot stand the sound of children laughing," he said again. I pulled the children inside and called the police who showed up a remarkable four hours later. After a brief conversation, they said the man would probably continue to make threats and there was no way of predicting if he would shoot a kid. They advised me to move, which we did.

Years later as I write this in my Seaside backyard, over the back fence the father of three kids admonished his daughter to be quiet. The girl, who is about 10, and the boy, who is about 7, were playing a game. They were laughing uproariously. "Nobody wants to hear that noise," he said.

I know they have a toddler who probably takes afternoon naps, and that is probably why he shushed her. Still, it took all my self-control not to call out to him, "Please don't tell her to be quiet on my behalf."

## LETTERS

### Irresponsible leadership

Beware Seaside; SEPRD board and executive director want to raise your taxes by \$250 to \$450 per year!

These amounts were announced at the recent board meeting on May 15. Perhaps more taxpayers should attend!

The SEPRD board has already spent many thousands of your tax dollars on consultants and others in an attempt to develop support for a larger aquatic center and mixed use buildings. As one who has used the aquatic facility for at least seven years, I can tell you that it isn't needed or wanted by the users.

I have watched the gradual decline of the pool since the arrival of Skylar Archibald as executive director of SEPRD. Skylar apparently had no experience in facility management and it shows in what has happened since he came here.

The pools have "crud" on the stainless steel that surrounds them. They used to be shiny and bright. The men's locker room was destroyed by what was supposed to be a renovation last year. To date, nothing has been done to fix the very obvious problems created. Please stop by and look for yourself.

These are just two examples of a complete lack of stewardship on the part of the board and executive director. Are you going to let these people have more of your tax dollars? **John Huismann Cannon Beach**

## MEETINGS

**MONDAY, May 28**  
**Seaside City Council**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

**TUESDAY, June 5**  
**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.

**WEDNESDAY, June 6**  
**Seaside Improvement Com-**

**mission**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

**Gearhart City Council**, 7 p.m., 698 Pacific Way, Gearhart.

**THURSDAY, June 7**  
**Seaside Parks Advisory Committee**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

**MONDAY, June 11**  
**Seaside City Council**, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

**THURSDAY, June 14**  
**Seaside Convention Center**

**Commission**, 5 p.m., 415 First Avenue.

**Cannon Beach Academy**, 5:30 p.m. 3718 S. Hemlock St., Cannon Beach.

**Gearhart Planning Commission**, 6 p.m., 698 Pacific Way, Gearhart.

**TUESDAY, June 19**  
**Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District**, Bob Chisholm Community Center, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A., Seaside.

**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, June 20**  
**Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee**, 3 p.m., 989 Broadway.

**THURSDAY, June 21**  
**Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission**, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.



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