

# An idyllic time in Seaside

SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



In 1958, Nikita Khrushchev assumed control of the Soviet Union. Elvis Presley was inducted into the U.S. Army. The average cost of a house was \$12,270.

For the 69 grads of 1957 and the 67 of the class of 1958, the world was mostly constrained by the junction to the south and the high school to the north, the prom to the west and the hills to the east. Alumni from those classes convened in Seaside for a weekend reunion on Oct. 4 at the Seaside Library.

Grads remembered an “idyllic time.” Sue Ward Lee described the freedom to ride a horse in the hills “all day as long as I got back for dinner.”

“My dad and mother just said, ‘Be independent.’ That was their goal.”

Marlene Ordway Laws remembered the same type of upbringing in Cannon Beach.

“It was the same with the Gearhart kids,” Judy Wrenn Carder added.

Downtown was much busier then, said Carol deLange Brenneman. “It astounds me when I go downtown in Seaside at this point during the summer at night. It’s really quite quiet. You can look down the street and hardly see any cars.”

In the 1950s, teens would cruise “around, car to car and car, in order to meet and greet,” Brenneman said.

It was so safe in Seaside, “we never did lock a door.”

The threat of a tsunami had yet to be recognized; most didn’t even hear the word until the Alaska quake and tsunami of 1964.

In those days, baseball was clearly America’s pastime, and Seaside’s Gulls were at the top as the No. 1 team in 1957. In 1958, the football Gulls played for the title, losing to Vail in the championship. Members of those teams, Ron Johnson, Garry Holmes and Neal Maine were among classmates at the reunion.

Class members described the school spirit, both on the field and among students. March bands and would practice before classes and march onto the field during games. The band had between 60 and 70 members — out of a total school size of 250 members.

“We were small, but mighty!” Lee said.

## Teaching excellence

It wasn’t only athletics where the class excelled, Sandra Gue Price, class of 1958 Valedictorian, said. “We had really good courses,” she said. “We had algebra, trigonometry, geometry and calculus. That was the math program.”

History teacher Carl Nydegger taught students critical skills, Lee recalled. “He said: ‘Read, but look at where your source comes from. Then decide.’ Which is very different from what’s on Facebook, (where) you take what’s there and run with it.”

“I never had a teacher like him,” she added.

At a time when nuclear energy was in its infancy, science teachers introduced students to the topic, Laws said.

Brenneman’s favorite faculty member was principal Leo Marlantes, who also taught social studies and world geography. “He always had a personal word that he would say to me that would be encouraging, whatever it would be,” she said.

“We all thought Mr. Marlantes was perfectly wonderful,” Ruth Elliott said. “Our teachers were our friends, someone we looked up to.”

Neal Maine said teachers offered “a lot more focus on you as a person, developing yourself and encouragement from the teachers.”

“Honestly, as I look back, if I hadn’t bumped into Mr. (Sherman) Black I don’t know where I would have ended up,”



COLIN MURPHEY

**Members of Seaside High School classes of 1957 and ‘58 at the Seaside Library. Back row: Ron Johnson, Garry Holmes, Judy Olson McAuley. Second row: Neal Maine, Helen Lerback Maki, Sue Ward Lee, Judy Wrenn Carder, Marlene Ordway Laws, Ruth Elliott, Gordon Inman. Front row: Carl Larson, Sandra Gue Price, Carol deLange Brenneman, Melva Teeple Hurd.**



SEA BREEZE

## The class of 1958.

Maine said. “It was about the people, about you as a person, not so much you were getting straight As.”

## Hangouts

The 1950s in Seaside saw an abundance of good eating, drinking, music and dancing.

Alumni recalled dining at the Par-TEE Room, Palm Beach Cafe and the Crab Broiler. The Crab Boiler was so good, people would wait for a table for hours, Price recalled.

“They had the best cole slaw on the whole coast,” Ron Johnson said. “It was just a real quiet, smooth place to spend a few hours and have a drink.”

“I remember a place called the Embers,” Lee said. “I couldn’t go because I was too young. When I turned 21, I said to my brother, ‘Take me to the Embers.’ They had the best jazz collection of anybody in Seaside, the best drink, and the atmosphere was almost continental.”

“I thought all towns had as many restaurants as we did around here, since we were a tourist town and there were always a lot of restaurants,” Carder added. “Then you’d go to another town the same size, but there were only one or two. We asked, ‘What’s going on? Why aren’t there all those restaurants?’”

Others remembered dance parties at the Bungalow; movies at the Times Theatre and the Strand. Trick-or-treating was done both downtown and door-to-door.

The crowning of Miss Oregon was a big event, at a time when Miss Seaside served as hostess of the event.

“I got to sit on the stage but didn’t have to do anything but enjoy the event,” Lee, Miss Seaside of 1957, said. “The year I was Miss Oregon, I got to accompany Miss Oregon all around the state. Why? Don’t ask me — I didn’t represent anything but Seaside. But boy, did I spread Seaside around!”

## Home again

While many of the classes of 1957 and 1958 migrated, others remained or later came back.

Price moved to Wisconsin, Minnesota, Canada, part-time Canada, part-time Mexico.

Brenneman went away for almost 30 years before returning to Seaside. “It’s like salmon coming back,” Brenneman said. “The family house is here. It’s when you want a little slower pace in your life and to

take it a little bit differently.”

Judy Wrenn Carder and her husband Al Carder lived in eastern Washington for 25 years. When Al retired, they returned to the beach. “We’ve been back here for 17 years and just love it,” she said.

“You don’t really let go of it,” Elliott put in. “One of my classmates, Judy Paulson, said ‘We all come home to die like elephants.’”

Price said she at one point she considered returning to Seaside, but found that the cost of living had risen and not much in the way of jobs. She eventually settled in the Queen Charlotte Islands in British Columbia, which she found “just like Seaside — trees, ocean, waves, and rocks, funky housing.”

Class members lamented some changes in Seaside; the lack of affordable housing and homelessness.

“We’re not dealing with our really needy people,” Brenneman said. “I think in the 1950s and ‘60s we had better programs in place to help people.”

## New school

As a new campus goes up in Seaside’s Southeast Hills, classmates recalled that they were also in transition to a new high school building. Cost for the new building, paid for by a bond approved by voters, was \$390,000.

In 1958, students attended classes in the old building as the new high school underwent construction.

“They had the windows open in spring, because of sawing, hammering and hollering,” Carl Larson, class of 1958, said. “It was quite a thing. I was thinking we had a new school already, but that thing is 60 years old.”

Price said she appreciated today’s Seaside campus relocation and the efforts by students, administration and staff. “Everything has been thought about, not just the school, and what it looks like, but the land and how things are being remediated. The kids came out of class and said, ‘I’m going to be there!’ They were so excited about it.”

“In my junior or senior year, the front of the entire high school fell on the front lawn,” Maine remembered. “It was brick and the whole brick front fell right in the front lawn. I remember this has got to be worth a few weeks off at least. They came and put big jacks on that entire brick panel and started cranking it up. We got out of school two lousy days. It was terrible.”

“It’s amazing we survived,” Brenneman laughed.

# A friendly neighborhood

Three years ago, before we were even looking for a house, we returned over and over to the same Seaside neighborhood. We were originally drawn because we liked walking on the south promenade; we’d park the car on Avenue U and take it from there. We often parked nearby the Osprey Café or the U Street Pub, both places we quickly grew fond of; sometimes after we completed our walk, we’d stop into Ken and Sons Market to do some grocery shopping. Every single time, I said to my spouse “I could live around here.”

Ken and Sons bills itself as a friendly neighborhood market and that’s true. They are very friendly. Ken’s is a family run business — it really is Ken and his sons, and Ken’s two daughters-in-law who work in the market. I love exchanging a few words with Ken, who is always cheerful and upbeat and has something good to say. The store could not be more convenient; for a relatively small neighborhood market they carry a lot of things. They have fresh meat and produce and coffee and tea; they have soda and frozen pizza and cheese and milk and eggs. They have trash bags and cake mixes and lots of cereal. They have candy and ice cream and ice and paper towels and laundry detergent and a well stocked first aid department should you be on vacation and develop a migraine headache or suffer a boo-boo. They have juice. They have Kerry Gold butter. They have beer. They have lemonade. If you’re staying at one of the nearby hotels or vacation rentals like the Sandy Cove Inn and Red Door Vacation Rentals or the Inn at the Shore or the Tides by the Sea and you forgot your toothbrush, you can pick one up at Ken’s.

Our friends often remark how fortunate we are to live so close to the U Street Pub and the Osprey Café. It is very nice to be able to walk to a nice place to eat and drink. My go-to thing to order at the Osprey is either the Hungarian mushroom soup or the house-made granola with fresh fruit, but it’s hard to resist their daily specials; as I am writing this, I see banana bread French toast and an omelet of the day packed with pork sausage, mushrooms, onions, queso fresca and chile verde. The Osprey has a full bar so you can get a bloody mary or a mimosa at 9 a.m.

The U Street Pub is a perfect neighborhood restaurant. We go there a lot. Some of our friends enjoy meeting us there. We’re all suckers for the shrimp po’ boy sandwich and the clams or mussels is part of it. The U Street Pub is a place where the servers behave like they know you even if they don’t really know you. They make you feel at home, that is if your home has an awesome selection of craft beer on tap and cool funny signs and surfboards as décor. My favorite sign they have at the U Street Pub says something like “You don’t have to be married to get a room in Seaside.”

My neighborhood is super friendly. I know most of my neighbors’ names. I know the names of the kids who live on the street and I’m happy to live on a street that has kids. I also know the names of most of the dogs living on the street; there’s Madelyn and Jackson and LaRue. I will say it’s tricky to be incognito if you’re living in this hood just because it is so friendly. I’m pretty sure our neighbors all know who we are because my husband plays the saxophone.

VIEW FROM THE PORCH  
EVE MARX

EVE MARX

## Ken and Sons Market in Seaside.

## MEETINGS

MONDAY, Nov. 12

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

**Seaside City Council**, workshop regarding new Seaside School District projects, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

THURSDAY, Nov. 15

**Seaside Tree Board**, 4 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

**Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission**, 6 p.m.,

City Hall, 989 Broadway.

TUESDAY, Nov. 20

**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 Planning Commission**, 7 p.m., work session, City Hall, 989 Broadway.

## OPINION

# Spay and Neuter Thrift Store serves a community need

The Spay and Neuter Thrift Store in Seaside has been contributing to the welfare of animals for over 45 years and is continuing that dedicated service today.

Mr. Pershing of Gearhart started the thrift store in his garage. Needing more space, it has grown from one to two and now three rooms of donated items; all clean, wearable and usable goods to serve the community and family. From ribbon to dishes, jeans to jewelry, the store benefits from

the contributions you share. Seasonal items are stored until the appropriate time of year or holiday when they are then available for purchase.

The sales generated from the store provide vouchers that are honored by veterinarians in our area for Clatsop County residents to use for their dogs and cats for spay and neutering. The heartfelt mission of the nonprofit store is to serve the community by enabling pet owners to care for their furry friends and reduce the population of

unwanted and uncared for animals.

This store provides a great service to the community but only through the commitment and love from volunteers.

The volunteers are the heart, soul and muscle of the store. They love one another and are dedicated to the store’s purpose. There’s laughter but also a lot of hard work. You can see their efforts the minute you walk into the store. It’s organized, clean and items are tastefully displayed. Our volunteers know

how to take the donations and change them to worthwhile merchandise.

But the store needs you. It needs more volunteers. A four-hour shift, one or more days per week will support the purpose of the thrift store, providing volunteers with friendship and camaraderie. Consider the opportunity.

The product of devotion to this little store were 606 certificates provided this year. That’s \$32,580 going to veterinarians to care for our pets.

Since 2014, 4,021 vouchers have been issued to pet owners in Clatsop County, including folks who care for feral cats. Those are numbers to celebrate. Contributions from the store also benefit local food banks and Clatsop County Animal Shelter.

So, consider joining us; we need you. Bring your passion for the health and welfare of animals and be a member of our team.

**Jeanne Nordmark Gearhart**

**SEASIDE Signal**

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