

Local news gets a boost as Signal to go weekly

Live nine miles from Astoria and eight miles from Seaside. It's like having a foot in both north and south Clatsop County, and as the publisher of both the Daily Astorian and Seaside Signal, it's a great place to be to appreciate the different personalities of the communities we serve.

Both towns have unique histories and features, both with great people and organizations. Although news of the region ties us all together, clearly having a newspaper with local voices and very local community news is important to both newspapers. Last year we did a readership survey both online and in the Seaside Signal to ask how we can improve both our news and our service to



the Seaside community. Then we asked business and community leaders to join us for breakfast and tell us what they thought of the paper.

One of the requests that came through loud and clear was that

FROM THE PUBLISHER
KARI BORGEN



Seaside wanted its paper to be weekly. We're glad to be able to make that happen. As of May 10 the Seaside Signal will become a weekly newspaper again.

Our company, EO Media Group, has owned the Seaside Signal and Cannon Beach Gazette since 2013. At that time, both publications were made twice monthly — the staff produced a newspaper every week, but alternated between the two publications.

Fast forward six years, and as

of May 1, Country Media will reacquire the Cannon Beach Gazette from EO Media Group. While it's bittersweet to say goodbye to the Cannon Beach Gazette in our publishing group, it's perfect timing to continue to publish a paper every week — the Seaside Signal. We are looking forward to concentrating on stories, meetings and issues important to Seaside every week.

Those of you who receive the Signal with your Daily Astorian subscription will receive the Seaside Signal every week with your weekend edition Astorian, delivered in your Saturday mail, as the Daily Astorian becomes The Astorian May 7, publishing Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

We will continue to cover South County news, sports and community stories, including Cannon Beach, especially in Coast Weekend. The Cannon Beach Gazette will continue to print at the Daily Astorian as do Country Media's five other North Coast newspapers.

We hope you'll support our efforts to bring you South County news every week with a subscription to the Signal, only \$40.50 to have it delivered for a full year — 52 weeks.

Other suggestions for stories or improvements? Please let me know

Kari Borgen is the publisher of the Seaside Signal and Daily Astorian; her email is kborgen@dailyastorian.com.

Public should drive firehouse process

I've always felt that as elected officials it's our job to engage the public and allow our residents to guide the decision-making process. And I've always had great faith in the citizens of Gearhart to make the right decisions for our community. All of our faith has been tested the last several years as we have had difficult and complex issues to navigate, but as I have always predicted the citizens have made the right choices again and again. Whether it's electing officials who honor and uphold our Gearhart Comprehensive Plan or like in 2017 when our citizens overwhelmingly voted in favor of continuing common-sense vacation rental regulations, designed to keep Gearhart the quiet residential community we all know and love. These choices have continued the quality of life we all enjoy as full time or part time residents of Gearhart.

We are now undergoing a new public process to help determine a suitable location for a new emergency response and resiliency station to replace an aging fire station that was built over 60 years ago. This is not an easy undertaking and while the majority of folks living in Gearhart may agree we need a new station there are many questions we need to answer to get to the finish line. Questions such as "how are we going to pay for a new station?" and "what location will serve the day to day needs of our community the best while providing emergency infrastructure and resiliency?"

Luckily, once again, this is going to be a public decision. In order to build a new station, it will have to go to a public vote, but even before we get to that point we are teaming up with every full time and part time resident of Gearhart to help choose the right location. All of the updated information is available on the Gearhart city website including a video of our Jan. 29 informational town hall where we presented the public need for a new station and new information on emergency preparedness and the current threats posed by a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami.

This public process is not just about feedback but about education as well. Residents and neighbors are getting together with folks that may have missed the town hall or have questions on the quickest and safest evacuation routes and how Gearhart can be resilient and sustainable in the midst of all types of emergencies. The education process is very important as it's a natural human reaction to attack information that might be contrary to what we thought we knew or what we may be afraid of. Sometimes fear and misinformation can lead to cynicism, fake news on social media, or a reluctance to prepare ourselves and our families properly

for a natural disaster.

The feedback process will continue through April 29 and the results will be published in a public report that will be presented to the city council.

GUEST COLUMN
MATT BROWN



We have always been lucky in Gearhart to have an amazing volunteer fire department that is certified and trained to deal with all types of emergencies from fires, to medical emergencies, to natural disasters. A new station would be a great tool for our community, and in addition to our brave volunteers, give us continued peace of mind that we will be safe and protected. I couldn't be more excited to begin this public process with all of you and as always, I have faith that you will make the right decision for Gearhart.

Matt Brown grew up in Gearhart and served for 7 years on the Gearhart Planning Commission before being elected as Mayor in 2016.

Looking forward by looking back

The Seaside Visitors Bureau is a future-forward institution. From our many branding projects to our annual grant program, I think it's pretty easy to see we have a habit of embracing change and development.

So I was pleased to learn about the Seaside Museum and Historical Society's ambitious plans to transform themselves into a history hub attraction for Seaside and the North Coast. I've reviewed the extensive planning document the museum developed and I look forward to supporting in ways that enrich the visitor experience and make sense for promoting tourism.

One immediate way that came to mind was to bring some of their historical items — maybe a revolving exhibit — from the museum to the Visitors Bureau front-and-center to share in addition to our magazines, brochures, and maps. Turns out, that's one of the key ways the museum is looking to add value to and increase visibility in the community.

If you have a business and a small space to host items, I highly recommend setting up an appointment to review the back-room archives at the museum. At the very least, you'll be moved by the enormity of Seaside's historical legacy.

DIRECTOR'S CHAIR
JOSHUA HEINEMAN



Seaside in the news

From a press perspective, the last month has been good. There were several far-reaching stories connected to the city in one way or another. Here's a selected overview in case you missed it:

California dailies

A daily newspaper in the Bay Area of California, the Mercury News republished a recent OC Register article in their travel section titled "8 Must-Stop Beer Spots for an Oregon Coast Road Trip" on Feb. 11. Seaside was home to two of those eight stops: Seaside Brewery and The Wine and Beer Haus.

USA Today

A somewhat smaller mention on a much larger scale, Interstate Amusement in Seaside got props

(plus a photo) for maintaining a solid fleet of antique Lusse bumper cars in a USA Today feature called "Bumper Cars: A Crash Course on the Classic Amusement Park Ride" on Feb. 21. This article had a readership reach up to 23 million!

The Oregonian

Reporter Jamie Hale wrote a March 3 feature article on the Tillamook Head hike that focused on exploring the "rugged" and "wild side" of the trail by beginning in the Elmer Feldenhimer Forest Preserve in Seaside instead of via Cannon Beach. Then on March 9 he followed it up with an article on why the Oregon Coast from Newport up to Astoria is a beer lover's paradise. Seaside Brewery is again featured with a photo, a nice write-up, and recommendations for the writer's favorite drink onsite.

Ch-ch-changes

We have some staffing changes in the works at the Visitors Bureau. Visitor

information specialist Chelsea Harper moved into a program manager role with Clatsop Court Appointed Special Advocates in Astoria this month. Clatsop CASA is an organization she has been passionate about supporting for a long time and we wish her well in her professional development. She's been a great resource and a friendly presence at the Visitors Bureau in the last two years.

While we were sad to see Chelsea go, we're excited for her next steps and equally excited to welcome long-time VB part-timer Josh Garhofer into the vacant full-time, front-desk role. From Monday through Friday, Josh can be reached via email at jgarhofer@cityofseaside.us or by calling 503-738-3097. Welcome, Josh!

If that's not enough change for one column, these two staffing adjustments also mean the Visitors Bureau will be hiring another part-time visitor information specialist in April. Interviews are ongoing. As always, more to come.

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