

LEADERS LOOK TO THE NEW YEAR

SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



What's ahead for 2020? We asked community leaders to provide their take on the year ahead.

Matt J. Brown, Mayor, Gearhart

2020 is a very important year for the City of Gearhart. Our number one priority is to build a new fire station.

As most of you know 2019 was spent gathering data and presenting location options to our residents so they may help guide this important process. The feedback has been amazing, with 82.5% of our citizens surveyed in favor of a new station and 79.4% of them in favor of a bond to fund the station.

Sheila Roley, Superintendent, Seaside School District

The Seaside School District is looking forward to a momentous year. In the fall of 2020, we will be opening our new K-12 campus where our students will be in beautiful spaces designed for learning and for safety.

Our goal is that this will be a place where all students, their families and our community feel welcome. Inside those spaces we are committed to our mission to help young people grow to be positive community members, to inspire them to see what is possible for their futures, and to present them with the educational opportunities to achieve their goals.

We will continue to strive to have equitable resources for all children, to provide an engaging, well-rounded, rigorous education, to attend to the health and well-being of our students and staff, and to build



Seaside School District Superintendent Sheila Roley



Gearhart Mayor Matt Brown



Gearhart Fire Chief Bill Eddy



SEPRD Executive Director Kyle Archibald



Seaside Mayor Jay Barber



Seaside Fire Chief Joey Daniels



Paulina Cockrum, Gearhart City Council President



Tom Horning, Seaside City Council

more and stronger community partnerships.

Skyler Archibald, Executive Director, Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District

My one goal for 2020 pertains to the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District and the community that we serve. For the last eight years, the district has pursued the opportunity of expansion to better meet the recreation needs of our residents.

In 2020, my ambition is that that pursuit develops into a reality. I am hopeful that the opportunity to expand and better serve our community's health needs and provide a safe space for kids and adults to PLAY is met with support and enthusiasm as it is one of the most important investments that we can make.

I'm also hopeful that our community, our state and our nation remain founded in the principles of tolerance and civility. There are always challenges and differences that may divide us, but we can work through those questions if we are willing to work together and listen and learn from each other.

Jay Barber, Mayor of Seaside

My hope and desire for Seaside in the New Year is to see tangible plans become formulated to address the urgent workforce/low income housing crisis in our community and on the North Coast.

We are a tourist-driven economy and when local businesses cannot hire and retain workers because they cannot find local, affordable housing we are then facing an urgent economic cri-

sis. It will take business leaders, developers, contractors and the city working together to lay out specific plans and actually see tangible results take place. We've been talking about this problem long enough. It is time to take action.

Joey Daniels, Seaside Fire Chief

Our big goal is to have our new tractor drawn aerial up and responding in the first few months of 2020.

Bill Eddy, Gearhart Fire Chief

Thanks to the countless hours devoted by the Fire Station Committee and City Council, Gearhart is moving forward with possibly placing a fire station on the ballot in 2020. With the increases and diversity of incidents compounded by decreasing volunteer num-

bers throughout the county the sharing of resources within the fire service is critical to move forward.

Aid agreements are already in place and used but the questions that need to be answered are: How can we improve these agreements, what are the changes as we look into the future, and how do we maintain and enhance the services now delivered to our citizens?

A special thank you to all the men and women, volunteer or career, that have helped maintain the quality services provided to their communities, citizens and visitors.

Paulina Cockrum, Gearhart City Council President

For Gearhart, as council president I hope we can complete the process of siting, designing and funding, and start construction of our new fire station. I hope we — council, staff and committees — can continue our civil discourse about our community needs and encourage participation of our residents and homeowners.

Tom Horning, Seaside City Council

I would like the city to develop a plan for replacing or building at least new five bridges that are necessary for tsunami evacuation routes, with the completion date by 2040, requiring funding if necessary by raising room taxes as much as two percent on an emergency basis, to be lowered later once the work is completed. This infrastructure investment will reduce future tsunami casualties by perhaps 80 percent and enhance Seaside as a proactive community that is forced to raise its own funds because neither the state nor federal governments are able to. Seaside would be the can-do community of the Cascadia coastline.

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

VIEW FROM THE PORCH

EVE MARX



As I write this column, it's five days until Christmas and I'm feeling pretty smug. My shopping is completed; all gifts have been wrapped.

This whole past week I've been having cozy coffees with friends. The house is decorated, albeit idiosyncratically, and there's only one big thing left to do, which is decide what we'll eat.

After decades of pancakes in the morning, served with real maple syrup, followed up a few hours later with a late afternoon meal of beef, lots of beef, and Yorkshire pudding, I've grown weary of pseudo-British Christmas fare and am thinking why not take out Thai Me Up? I just saw on Facebook they're open Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, so, really, why not?

It's crazy to imagine how much time and energy I wasted stressing over Christmas and all I had to do and buy. I remember frantic moonlight excursions to big box stores fighting off other parents to score the latest must-have toy. I remember toiling at all hours making presents for my child's teachers and school bus drivers — one year it was beribboned jars of homemade salsa, another homemade wreaths — and feeling distraught glimpsing the looks of disappointment on their faces when they saw it wasn't a gift card, or, better yet, straight up cash. My family and a handful of

family friends recall traditions of our East Coast Christmas Day. It was always freezing with six inches of ice and snow and no plow guy showing up. Luckily we never went anywhere, but

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had friends drop in instead. One friend came over early and we all joked how she was the only one not wearing a bathrobe. Another liked arriving midday to hang out in the kitchen drinking coffee while I got the massive dinner going. She usually stayed long enough to switch to wine from caffeine.

Since relocating to the Pacific Northwest we're developing new traditions. I got a new stove this year and it has a built-in griddle. We could swap out the traditional pancakes for grilled brioche breakfast sandwiches.

The only tradition that never changes is our pets getting the most gifts. We've always been indulgent with our animals; I winced thinking how much I spent once upon a time on horse blankets. This year our min-pin is our only fur child so she'll be showered with treats and toys and a new coat to keep her warm.

This is the time of year people start making New Year's



Our son, December 1987, excited for Christmas. At the time, he had no idea what Christmas was, only that it was a time to be joyous.

resolutions. In years past I've resolved to go on a diet, drink more water, hold my tongue. I've resolved to donate to animal charities and shelters, but not take on another cat or dog.

Over the years, I've failed miserably at keeping these promises, which is why I often abstain from making any resolutions at all.

That said, for 2020 I'm doing something different. This year I'm resolving to stay open to new experiences. Another goal

is to be more flexible. I fully intend to plank (that's a yoga thing) daily and ratchet up my morning routine of 200 crunches to 250. I resolve to eat more leafy dark green vegetables, although I've pretty much given up on kale.

I also resolve to do all or most of my food shopping in Seaside at the Hamilton Market. What a gift it is to have a great little grocery store right in the neighborhood.

Happy New Year!

LETTERS

Participate in Culture Trust tax credit program

Every Oregonian has the right to direct a portion of their state taxes to fund arts and culture, but only a small percentage act on it.

Here's how it works: Make a donation to one or more of Oregon's 1,400+ cultural nonprofits, then make a matching gift to the Oregon Cultural Trust by Dec. 31. You get 100% of the Cultural Trust donation back when you file your state taxes — by claiming the cultural tax credit — and the state Legislature invests that same amount in Oregon culture.

In Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook Counties grant awards have exceeded \$707,000, including a FY2020 award of \$17,327 to the Astor Library Friends Association.

While the new tax laws reduced the number of Oregonians who itemize deductions at the federal level, the benefits of investing in Oregon culture remain the same. Whether or not you itemize, your donation to the Cultural Trust still prompts a 100% tax credit on your state taxes!

Contributions to the Cultural Trust are easy to make and can be done online at www.culturaltrust.org. The Trust can accept appreciated stock as well as IRA distributions, which may provide additional tax benefits. The tax credit is limited to \$500 for individual filers, \$1,000 for joint filers and \$2,500 for C-corporations.

If you enjoy Oregon's rich culture, participating in the Cultural Trust tax credit program is the best way to give back. Make sure a portion of your state taxes supports arts and culture. It's a win-win for everyone!

Bereniece Jones-Centeno Astoria