

FIRE TRUCK IS A HIT AT SEASIDE OPEN HOUSE

SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



The public received an opportunity to check out the fire department's latest addition, engine 3148, a tractor-drawn aerial quint with a 100-foot ladder, designed to reach Seaside's tallest buildings.

The open house brought residents and visitors of all ages to the firehouse to check out the nearly \$1.2 million apparatus.

"It's basically a tractor with a big fifth wheel," Seaside Fire Chief Joey Daniels said of the 60-foot truck at the Saturday, Jan. 25, event.

For operators, certification involves a three- to four-day class, Rankin said, with four hours of drive time in the front seat, with brakes and controls, and 10 hours of drive time in the rear tiller seat.

"The tiller seat drives these back steer wheels," Rankin said. "The guy up front

has the gas and brake, and he drives the tractor. It bends like a fifth wheel."

In front, the aerial operator runs the truck and ladder using a joystick.

Training is underway, Rankin said, with 17 firefighters in training.

Along with basic functions, drivers must demonstrate they can run the ladder and place it on buildings.

The open house aimed to thank voters for funding for the new apparatus, Daniels said, which arrived in late December from Rosenbauer's manufacturing facility in South Dakota.

"The biggest surprise is where it can go," Daniels said. "We were hoping to go at least thof the city, but I would say we can go to 99% of the city. I'm really surprised what we can do with this, and look forward to using it."

Councilor Tita Montero said it was "exciting that a small town like Seaside has come forth and funded such wonderful fire equipment. We have such wonderful volunteers, so enabling them to do their job even better and better. It's great — kudos to the voters and taxpayers."



A glimpse up the 100-foot ladder truck.

R.J. Marx



Division Chief David Rankin aboard the aerial quint.



City Councilor Tita Montero and Chief Joey Daniels looking up at the ladder truck.



At the front of the quint, the driver communicates with the operator in the rear to steer and operate the ladder.

'Finding Hope' amidst alarming trafficking numbers

VIEW FROM THE PORCH

EVE MARX



"Finding Hope," by Seaside author Shannon Symonds, was inspired by two things: the author's dream to write a novel that keeps readers up all night, and her desire to carry readers to a world where they can walk beside a survivor.

Survivors are the heroes of Symonds story, four broken people who work together to save one lost girl.

"We don't have to be perfect to make a difference in someone else's life," Symonds said.

Her fictional character, a young girl named Hope, lives in a town an awful lot like Seaside, although it's not called Seaside.

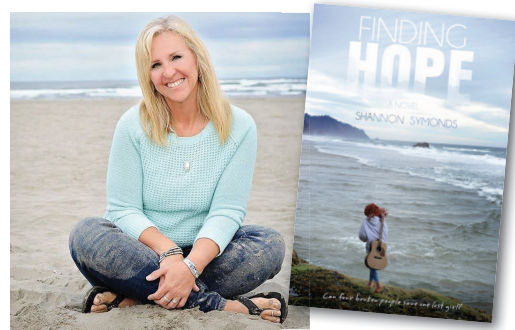
Shortly after we meet Hope, she becomes a runaway. She runs away from the derelict trailer where she lives alone with her creepy stepfather who she calls "The Rat" after her mother took off for parts unknown.

Hope spends some nights on the street, folding herself into doorways and crawling behind and under things.

She continues showing up each morning for school where she makes good grades and lands an after school job at a soup and coffee bar, managing to keep herself clean and camouflaged so that nobody notices she's a street kid.

Nobody except the keenly observant Mabel, who also works at the soup joint and who slips Hope a key so she can creep inside at night.

Eventually Mabel invites Hope to bunk



"Finding Hope," by Shannon Symonds.

at her home, a home she shares with a whole lot of other folks with their own dire and frightening problems.

There's also a love affair, conducted chastely, that runs throughout the book. Call it the B-story if you like.

Symonds said she was inspired by Seaside's own homeless and vulnerable youth. While working a decade ago on a project with local schools, she became aware of the Seaside statistics. "The numbers were alarming then," she said. "I'm sure today they are higher."

When the group Operation Underground Railroad, which aims to stop sex trafficking, asked her to write their volunteer newsletter, Symonds took their online volunteer training and researched the subject, which helped her plot her book.

The Oregon Coast is no stranger to the danger of sex trafficking. In 2018, Erin Ludwig, a victim specialist for the FBI, gave a presentation in Tillamook on the state of human trafficking. One in three homeless teens will be recruited within 48 hours of experiencing homelessness, Ludwig said. "The teen will be approached by a pimp or a trafficker."

In Symonds' story, Hope has a close call, snared by a devils homeless girl who

works for a pimp. Invited to what's been advertised as a fun, let-your-hair-down teen party, Hope narrowly escapes what would certainly be her ruin, if not her death.

Makes you wonder what's really behind any underage drinking party, especially ones in Seaside hotels hosted by adult men.

Out of curiosity, I went on a hook-up site, and it took me no time at all to see who's allegedly available in Seaside. The site doesn't suggest in any way that these women are prostitutes. These chicks are just looking to be your friend for an hour or so, unless you want to become a regular. My eyes locked on a girl who claimed she's 19 but looked much younger. The day I looked, there were 24 women available for "fun" in Seaside. Let's be clear: the site is not technically a prostitution site (which is illegal) because all payment is "suggested." Or, as the man who told me about the site said: "It's implicit; you know you're meant to leave a gift in the form of legal tender." My question is, are these women working on their free will, or are they being trafficked?

Just so you know, "Finding Hope" has a happy ending.

Symonds, who has a day job with Foster Club, is always writing. She said she's got one in the works featuring the same characters and coastal community. The new book is a young adult romance with a little mystery.

"I always start with a carefully outlined plot and then somewhere toward the end the characters take control of their own destiny," she said. "That's my favorite part of the writing process. It's like watching a movie."

Find "Finding Hope" at Beach Books in Seaside. You can also order it on Amazon.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Tuesday, Feb. 4

Seaside Community Center Commission, 10 a.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A.

Seaside Library Board, 4:30 p.m., Seaside Library, 1131 Broadway.

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District, board workshop, 5:15 p.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.

Seaside Planning Commission, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Wednesday, Feb. 5

Seaside Improvement Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

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

Thursday, Feb. 6

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

Monday, Feb. 10

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

Thursday, Feb. 13

Convention Center Commission, 5 p.m., Seaside Civic and Convention Center, 415 First Ave.

Gearhart Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 698 Pacific Way.

Tuesday, Feb. 18

Union Health District of Clatsop County, 8 a.m., Seaside Providence Hospital Ed Center, Room B.

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

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

Seaside School District Board of Directors, 7 p.m., 1801 S. Franklin, Seaside.



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