



Leaders eye early May beach reopening

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

Some members of Seaside City Council want to take matters into the city's hands and reopen the beaches — sooner rather than later.

Seth Morrissey brought a motion to add a discussion and vote on the reopening of Seaside beaches, trails and waterways at the

city's next council meeting on Monday.

The motion came from frustration with the slow pace for reopening the city after Gov. Kate Brown's stay-at-home order.

"I think we're in a unique position," Morrissey said. "We really need to make decisions for the best interests of Seaside and its residents and not wait for that to come from the county level."

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department closed Seaside beaches on April 10 at

the request of city officials.

The beaches remain closed from the estuary to the Cove.

City Councilor Randy Frank said he would like to see the beach opened as soon as Monday. "There are a lot of people impacted," he said. "I'd love to see the beach open. I agree that perhaps the timing is important, but personally I feel May 4 would be a good date."

Hotels could open soon after, he said,

with a percentage of their rooms open and social distancing measures in place.

Not all city councilors felt the rush to reopen.

City Councilor Steve Wright called for a united front with other cities in Clatsop County. "We can't just do it in a vacuum on our own. We have to do it with everyone else."

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Pacific Way Cafe to close after 32 years



Pacific Way Cafe in Gearhart.

Restaurant feels impact of coronavirus pandemic

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

The Pacific Way Cafe at the southeast corner of Pacific Way and Cottage in Gearhart will close after serving as a gathering place and special occasion dining destination for 32 years.

After meeting with chef Geoff Gunn on Saturday, owners Lisa and John Allen told their 20 full-time and part-time employees that the cafe will permanently close because of financial impacts from the coronavirus pandemic.

"We all three knew this was insupportable," Lisa Allen said. "We knew it would not be a viable business without revenue to supply employees and food cost. We cannot financially ruin ourselves to the point where we would sell our home and live on the street."

"John and I agonized over this," Lisa Allen said. "When this pandemic first hit, we were on a one-week break, a closure. Instead of going on vacation, we had the idea to renovate the dining rooms at the cafe. We repainted, we had brand-new cushions sewn for the chairs. We spent \$10,000. The dining room has never looked more beautiful — and now no one will ever sit in it."

With social distancing rules, the cafe — which is comprised of a collec-



Lisa and John Allen in 2018. The Allens presided over three decades of success at the Pacific Way Bakery and Cafe.

tion of intimate dining areas — would cut the number of diners by 50%, she said. "You can't make a living with that. I could not even bring back one cook. We could not financially sustain that."

The Allens applied for the Small Business Administration disaster relief program without result. "We applied for the PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) and heard nothing back from our bank or from anyone," Lisa Allen said.

Gov. Kate Brown's extension through July 6 of Oregon's state of emergency for COVID-19 was the final blow. The Allens dreamed of opening a restaurant inspired by their own favorite dining experiences, from Portland to Paris.

When the building at 601 Pacific Way — formerly a restaurant called Eat Your Heart Out — became available, the couple jumped.

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City Council approves \$250,000 in relief grants

Money for businesses suffering during coronavirus

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

On April 6, Seaside City Council took action to deliver a relief package for local businesses and residents.

Less than a month later, City Council approved \$250,000 in relief for businesses that have suffered economic harm from government restrictions during the pandemic.

Director of Tourism Marketing Joshua Heineman announced results at Monday's City Council meeting.

With 142 applications by the deadline, the city received requests for more than \$520,000 in funding requested by retailers, food service, businesses and professionals.

Of eligible applications, 126 of 135 received all or part of their request, with 11 of those applications fully funded.

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Seaside to hold mobile graduation

Graduates to receive diplomas in their cars at the Broadway Turnaround

By R.J. MARX
Seaside Signal

This will be the first Seaside High School graduation to start with the turn of an ignition key.

On Tuesday, principal Jeff Roberts announced the protocol for the class of 2020's ceremony, to be held Monday, June 8.

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A 102nd birthday celebration for 'Detective' Blake

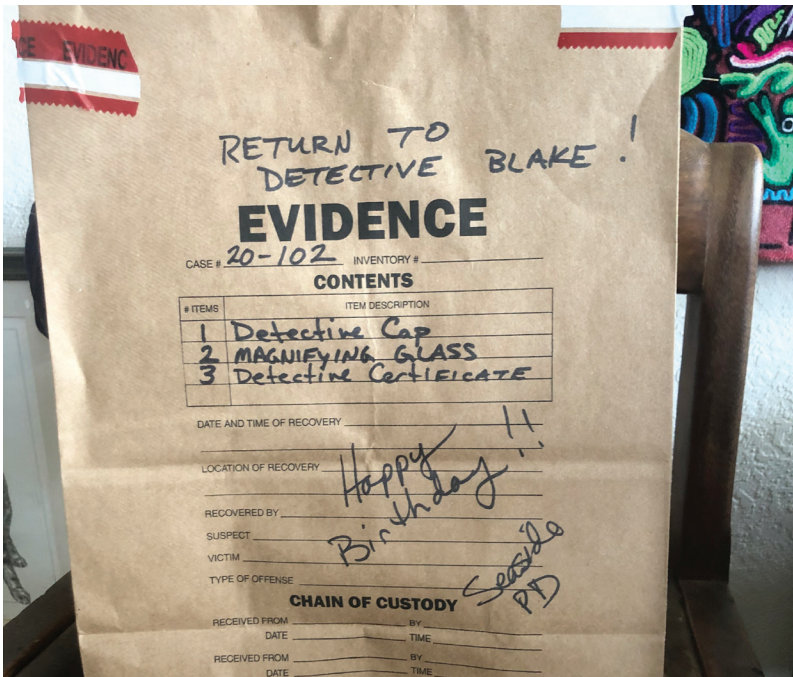
By R.J. MARX
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On April 29, Sons of Beaches volunteers, Abate motorcycle volunteers, friends, neighbors and dogs all set a "block party tone" for Marion Blake's 102nd birthday celebration. With social distancing at top of mind, neighbors and friends honked horns and cheered at the celebration, daughter Mary Blake said.

Police Chief Dave Ham,

gloved, masked and carrying an evidence bag, named Marion Blake an "honorary detective," a lifelong dream. Seaside firefighters arrived by fire truck to share the fun.

"It's hard to put language around the good feelings felt by all," Mary Blake said. "We feel so grateful to be in this sweet connected community. When I asked my mudder for a quote about how she felt about the celebration, 'accent the positive, eliminate the negative, latch on to the affirmative and don't mess with Mr. In-Between.'"



LEFT: Honorary Detective Marion Blake. RIGHT: Marion Blake received the tools of the detective trade at her 102nd birthday party.

Photos by Mary Blake