

Gearhart therapist buoys clients amid pandemic

SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



Slip into By the Way and visitors will find cards, coffee and gifts.

But in an area carved out in the rear of the building, Delores Sullivan has redesigned the space to accommodate patients at her new therapy office.

She moved to Gearhart two years ago with her husband and said she saw a need for therapy options. “A lot of the other therapists told me, ‘Boy, we could really use some good therapists,’” she said. “But I kept thinking there has to be a good space if I’m going to come back. It has to feel right. I wanted to find the right place.”

The Gearhart location offers the kind of low-key space Sullivan desired.

“Coffee, therapy and the beach — it’s perfect. I just love it, and the good energy here,” she said.

Sullivan grew up in rural Missouri and moved to Portland when she was 21 with her boyfriend.

“I’ve had three distinct careers in 50 years, all overlapping,” she said. “One in nursing, next in fashion business as a model, then model scout, and model agent and finally therapist and teaching.”

She was president of the Oregon Adoptive Rights Association when Rolling Stone publisher Jann Wenner assigned feature writer Randall Sullivan to profile her in 2000.

She was involved in Oregon adoption law, working to give adult adoptees the right to their original sealed birth certificates through Measure 58.

The writer was struck by her, describing her in the article as “not only beautiful but articulate, passionate and charming as well.”

“It was a random meeting at 1:30 in the afternoon at the Brasserie Montmartre and there was nobody there but me and him,” she recalled. “He recorded me for four hours and then he met me again and recorded me four more.”

While their lives were complicated at the time, they began a long relationship and married in October 2018. She practiced therapy and taught in the psychiatry departments at Portland State University, Oregon Health & Science University and at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Counseling Center for three years before retiring.

With 23 years in practice, Sullivan said she wants to create a place where people feel safe.

“When someone comes to therapy they want to feel heard,” she said. “They want to know someone cares and can help them. They want to talk to someone who has the experience and skills to be present to their difficulties and who can bring about healing and resolution.”

She said therapy is a unique human relationship based on compassion, empathy and mutual collaboration.

Sullivan works with those seeking help with depression, anxiety, stress, family conflict and trauma. Therapy can be short term or long term. “There’s nothing they can’t talk about with me here,” she said.

Particularly during the coronavirus pandemic, she said people are feeling a lot of stress in their relationships.

“People are very scared, not knowing what’s going on,” she said. “The fragmentation of how things have been managed has been very scary to people.”

While telephone or video therapy is an option, she said people have preferred to come in. “I think as long as it’s safe and people are monitored, it’s better in person. People need the human connection and they particularly need it right now because they’re feeling isolated.”

“The goal is to give them an anchor, to stabilize them,” she said. “You can’t work through any kind of traumatic feelings until you stabilize them, so I try to look at them holistically. What is their health? Are they sleeping? Eating? Are they walking on the beach? Are they getting some connection, FaceTime or telephone with people they care about?”

When not working at her practice, Sullivan spends time with her grown children, stepchildren and seven grandchildren.

“I love to go to the beach,” she said. “I love seafood, fish and chips. I love the food here. I love the people in Gearhart, they’re very interesting. It’s a very eclectic mix of people, that’s why it’s fun to have a practice here. Here I can flex, if people want to see me on a Friday morning, I can work that.”

One of the unique challenges of practicing in a small community is chance encounters with clients are inevitable.



R.J. Marx

Delores Sullivan in her Gearhart office. Sullivan works with those seeking help with depression, anxiety, stress, family conflict and trauma.



Delores Sullivan

Inside Delores Sullivan’s Gearhart therapy office.

ing in a small community is chance encounters with clients are inevitable. “But I manage confidentiality the same way I would in Portland or Charlotte. Outside of here I’m not going to say, ‘Hey, what did you think of

therapy the other day?’”

“We’re in such a unique shift,” she said. “I believe between the way the world was prior to COVID and the way we’re going to be now, it will never be the way it was.”

BRIEFS

Census outreach

Workers from the U.S. Census Bureau will be in Seaside and Gearhart next week to help people respond to the census.

A Mobile Questionnaire Assistance booth will be at the Seaside Farmer’s Market from 2 to 6 p.m. on Aug. 12 and at the Sweet Shop Gearhart from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Aug. 13.

People can also respond online at my2020census.gov and click “respond” or call 844-330-2020.



Cyndy O'Reilly

Gearhart Windermere adds new agent

Cynthia “Cyndy” O’Reilly

joined Windermere Realty in Gearhart as a real estate broker. She joins a network of more than

500 professionals in 14 offices.

O’Reilly grew up in the Pacific Northwest. She married into a U.S. Coast Guard family over 10 years ago and has spent that time between Alaska and the Oregon Coast. She and her family live in Gearhart.

NW Connector trip planner available online

NW Connector offers an enhanced online trip planner for riders to and around the northwestern part of the state.

By typing in a starting address and destination with the NW Connector area, the planner determines the best trip routes

and optionsthrough an interactive map.

Riders may reserve a pickup or drop-off within three-quarters of a mile of normal schedule routes. Riders with special needs may also make advance reservations. Three- and five-day travel passes are available for unlimited travel. Visit nworegontransit.org for more information.

Transit forum ahead

Sunset Empire Transportation District will hold a meeting Aug. 18 to focus on transportation needs in Clatsop County for older adults, individuals with disabilities and the public.

The meeting will provide information and updates to the county’s coordinated human services transportation plan.

The update will build on the existing arrangements in the county and nearby areas, including the NW Connector transit agency alliance and the district’s partnerships with human service agencies serving clients with disabilities.

Participants may join the meeting at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/811936141>. The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at noon. Participants are encouraged to RSVP by emailing ccampoll@rlsandassoc.com or calling 937-299-5007.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Please observe ‘no camping’ rules on the beach

I noticed people camping on the north end of the beach towards the estuary for several days this past week. I called the Seaside police nonemergency phone to report this and they made them move along. I went to where they were camping and tried to clean up the used toilet paper, grill, etc.

This is why we do not want camping on the beach. If you see someone camping on the beach, please report it. Thank you Seaside police for helping.

Reid Johnson
Seaside

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

TUESDAY, AUG. 11

Seaside School District, 6 p.m., electronic meeting, www.seaside.k12.or.us/meetings.

THURSDAY, AUG. 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, AUG. 18

Sunset Empire Park and

Recreation District Board of Directors, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A.

Seaside Planning Commission, work session, 6 p.m., City Hall, 698 Pacific Way.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 19

Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

THURSDAY, AUG. 20

Seaside Prom Centennial Planning Committee, 4 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

MONDAY, AUG. 24

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

MONDAY, AUG. 31

Seaside City Council, 6 p.m., joint vacation rental workshop with Planning Commission, 989 Broadway.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 1

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

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

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



Lewis and Clark living historians display their product at last year’s Salt Makers event in Seaside.

Tourism grants go to six Seaside events

Seaside Signal

Some of Seaside’s beloved signature events got a boost in July as the annual Tourism Grant Program in Seaside awarded more than \$28,000 in funding to six different organizations for the 2020-2021 fiscal cycle.

While total awards from previous years have equaled up to \$50,000, this current round of \$28,025 in award funding represents a \$3,025 increase in funding awarded to community events outside the fireworks show, according to Joshua Heineman, the city’s director of tourism marketing.

Events include Art in the Park, Sept. 19; Oktoberfest, Sept. 26; Lewis and Clark Salt Makers Return, Sept. 12 and Sept. 13; Halloween Happenin’s, Oct. 30-Nov. 1; Pouring at the Coast brew festival, March 13 and March 14, 2021; Prom centennial photo exhibit in June; and Coast Walk Oregon in September.

Seaside Signal

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