

Inventory reveals 48,000 items in Seaside Library

BETWEEN THE COVERS
ESTHER MOBERG



R.J. Marx

The Seaside Library reopens with social distancing and masks in place.

The past year has been interesting here in library land. After an extended closure due to the pandemic, the doors at the Seaside Public Library reopened for browsing last Friday, with a limited number of computers available for public use for a maximum of one hour. Masks are required at all times while in the library.

Over the past 11 months, libraries in Oregon were forced to adopt outside curbside book delivery services due to the coronavirus pandemic and lack of space for social distancing in their buildings. We in Seaside were fortunate to have a large enough building to handle most of our social distancing needs during the pandemic, open 40 of 52 weeks in 2020.

The first time we had to shut our doors, back at the end of March in 2020, the library staff spent the time inventorying the entire library of 48,000 items, cleaning the carpets, cleaning the library, cleaning, cleaning and more cleaning.

We shifted shelves and organized them. We digitized our library card registration forms and set up new services that included helping patrons on their comput-

ers with remote access while staff remain at the front desk. We set up a station in the library for library card registration so we no longer use a paper form.

Our goal is to help patrons and staff reduce physical contact to keep everyone safe and healthy. Even when our doors are closed people can still check out and return books. We have two outside drop boxes for returns that are always available, 24/7. We have added to our eBook content, which you can access through the library's website and the Libby

app.

Our youth librarians had already planned and set up for summer reading for the year (they start planning in January!) and they had to turn around and change their entire summer reading program, which they did in a matter of weeks. They created take-home packets for children in our community and made sure access was easy. They even got the packets out to kids on the school bus routes so no children were left out of getting a book, summer reading log or craft packet to help them

through this past summer of pandemic lockdown.

The library gave out over 500 summer reading craft packets this summer. We had virtual programs including preschool story time and teen events throughout 2020. We posted videos of craft examples as well as posts and videos about new books, events, book reviews, contests and more. Our youth librarians worked with the elementary and middle school teachers this fall to create classroom visits through Zoom, connecting kids to books and reading. Students could

request books through an online Google document form.

Library staff worked with the teachers to get more books out to them from the library and helped get more students signed up for library cards. All youth up to age 19 in Clatsop County qualify for a free library card at their closest geographical library through the Libraries Reading Outreach program. Our children's librarian puts together book bundles for teachers, parents and students either by phone or email requests. Staff stayed connected with school librarians throughout the year to try and support and collaborate on work.

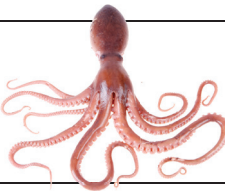
Current services include an assortment of virtual events for a wide range of ages. This month we are offering our monthly trivia event (online only), teen events through Zoom every Tuesday and preschool story times every Thursday morning on Zoom. For more information on current events, please check out our Facebook page or website.

Our eBooks and audiobooks are always available digitally through the Libby app or through our library website.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Sunday hours are 1 to 4 p.m. Visit the library at 1131 Broadway; online at seasidelibrary.org or call 503-738-6742.

Library, aquarium team up for 'Maine Event' fundraiser

SEASIDE AQUARIUM
TIFFANY BOOTHE



As many of you may know, the Seaside Aquarium has a long, rich history. Established in 1937, many people have participated in the aquarium's success over the years, but few have dedicated as much time, energy and love as Neal Maine. Maine's dedication to the Seaside Aquarium, the community and nature is inspirational.

Maine had been involved with the aquarium for many years when he decided to join the Seaside Aquarium board of directors in 1995. He joined the board in hopes of helping the aquarium expand their educational outreach and to help the aquarium get more involved in both the community and the scientific world.

Maine spearheaded the beginning of what is now the Northern Oregon/Southern Washington Marine Mammal Stranding Network, a successful partnership with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Portland State University and the Seaside Aquarium. In 1995, Maine brought an idea to the board ask-

ing them to participate in what he called the Seaside beach and Necanicum Estuary Discovery Program.

This program was designed to be a free tool for both locals and visitors to discover and learn about the local beach and estuary environments. With the goal to get people to view their recreational sites in a bit of a different way, as a living breathing ecosystem. While the program has changed over the years the mission is still the same.

After 25 years of dedication, Maine thought it was time for someone else to take the reins and he resigned from the board of directors in early 2020. His time on the board will never be forgotten and he will be missed greatly. So how do you thank a guy who means the world to you? And what do you give a man who gives back so much to the community? You do the same. The Seaside Aquarium has decided to do a yearly fundraiser, "The Maine Event." All the admissions collected on the last Sunday in February will go to an organization or organizations of Maine's choosing.

The inaugural "Maine Event" will happen on Feb. 28. With COVID-19 this event may look a little different from future events. Due to COVID-19 and the restrictions set, the aquarium will not



R.J. Marx

Neal Maine on the Avenue S bridge as he photographs a blue heron.

know for sure if they will be allowed to open their doors to the public. The Seaside Aquarium is providing two paths for participation this year. If the aquarium is open to the public, all admissions collected from 9 a.m. to

5 p.m. will be donated to the Seaside Library Foundation 501©(3). If the aquarium is not open or if you want to participate in the Seaside Library fundraiser but cannot make it to "The Maine Event," call the Seaside Aquarium at 503-

738-6211. For a donation, the aquarium will send you a free pass to use at a later date.

The Seaside Public Library will use any proceeds from the event for the long-term goals of the library.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

District taxpayers beware!

I just attended a board workshop on Broadway Middle School last night. I try to attend any board function as I plan to be a candidate for the Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District board in the June election. There are a number of issues that bother me that I need to share with you.

The board claimed that there was no "fix" in to recruit board members that favored the purchase of Broadway Middle School. I observed every interview and I was interviewed myself. I can state with cer-

tainity that it was made very clear to me in that process that unless one favored the purchase of Broadway Middle School, one stood no chance of being appointed to the board. So, the "fix" was in.

The board told everyone of all of the wonderful things that they planned to do with Broadway Middle School prior to the purchase. At the meeting last night, I learned that they have retained consultants called the Klash Group to tell them what to do with the building. They also plan to have the Klash Group recommend more consultants to tell them what to do.

Does this sound expensive to you? It is! Where is the money going to come from? Why wasn't this planning done before the purchase?

The board claimed that they have no plans to come to the taxpayers for more money to make Broadway Middle School usable. Yet all that they can cite are hopes and dreams of getting commercial partners or grants to finance the rehabilitation of the middle school. This fairy tale makes about as much sense as their so-called business plan to justify the loan.

At the meeting, numerous references were made to "staff" efforts to work

at the middle school and make it usable. I have to ask, how about caring for the pool that the district was founded to establish? I am a regular pool user and I'm here to tell you that the pool has been in a steady decline for years.

You will all have a choice in the coming election. If you are happy that the board went behind your back and bought the middle school, please vote for the incumbents in the upcoming election. If, on the other hand, you don't want to pay more taxes for this boondoggle, I suggest that you vote out every incumbent and choose a board that

will follow your wishes.
John Huisman
Seaside

Observe social distancing

I am very grateful to have received my first vaccination shot today, being a health care practitioner.

However, the vaccination site could very well have been a super-spreader event! No social distancing was being observed while in the line outside the building and once we entered the building it got even worse!

The coordinator agreed with me that the setting did

not feel safe. Way too many people crammed together in a small space and she said that had been the case previously also when it was blowing and raining outside!

I haven't been in as crowded a setting since the beginning of the pandemic. Once we got further inside the social distancing got better but really was not great in a small hallway.

And to my dismay, one of the screeners had her mask down below her nose! This is simply not acceptable! I would hope that in future events there is better sense exhibited!

Deborah Albrecht Gearhart

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

MONDAY, FEB. 22
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

TUESDAY, FEB. 23
Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District Board

of Directors, regular meeting, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3
Gearhart City Council, 7 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

MONDAY, MARCH 8
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

SEASIDE Signal



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