

Fred Causer follows the scanner

SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



If someone calls 911, chances are Fred Causer knows about it.

Causer is one of the administrators of Clatsop County Scanner Group Uncensored, a Facebook page that shares raw information broadcast by emergency dispatchers.

The group, which has more than 13,000 members, posts items on everything from car crashes and missing persons to noise complaints and cows in the road.

Growing up, Causer remembers his grandmother monitoring a police scanner in the house.

“I said, ‘Grandma, why are you listening to that? What is it? What do you get out of that?’ And she said, ‘Information. I get to know who the characters are and what’s going on around me.’”

Causer grew up and has lived in Seaside most of his life. He and his wife, Jennifer, who also serves as a scanner page administrator, have known each other from childhood. The couple returned to Seaside to take care of his ailing mother, Carol Ann, who died in 2016.

Jennifer Causer is program manager at a group home that takes care of disabled people. They both volunteer for the Wildlife Center of the North Coast, doing bird transports with occasional rescues and recoveries. They have three children. Fred Causer also has twins from a previous marriage.

Causer connected with the Clatsop County Scanner Group Uncensored page on Facebook. He saw it as a way to bring scanner listeners together. “We could share it around and get the same information to everybody in hopes of trying to make a better community,” he said.

He said he rarely gets a full night sleep as the scanner is a constant. “I actually have multiple scanners in my house,” he said.

The founder of the Facebook page, who goes by a pseudonym, invited the Causers to join as administrators — volunteer roles that require careful monitoring of what goes up on the site.

There are four moderators as well, Causer said, Rosie Ojala, Dan Sealy, Willie TenEyck and Rene Armstrong.

“They are also volunteers, who have a mutual love for the scanner traffic as well as keeping the community informed,” he said.

“We take a hard stance on people that want to disseminate hate or any kind of violence and stuff,” Causer said. “Facebook is doing a great job of overseeing a lot of it too now. It makes our job a little bit



R.J. Marx

Fred Causer, a Seaside resident and administrator for the Clatsop County Scanner Group Uncensored.

SCANNER PAGES

Scanner pages are popular in communities across the country and can take on outsized roles in places without local newspapers or radio stations. But sharing snippets of raw, unconfirmed reports from emergency dispatchers — and encouraging people to comment — can spread misinformation.

easier, but we still have our problems with people.”

Causer said there’s a lot of confusion about the group’s name.

“They think that ‘uncensored’ means that they can just come there and say whatever they want, spew whatever hate or divide you want to do,” he said. “We don’t allow that. We’re not a rant-and-rave page.

THE SITE ALSO HAS A NO-POLITICS POLICY.

When we say ‘uncensored,’ we’re talking about what goes over the scanner. There might be a fatality accident and there might be details in that people might not want to see. That’s why we say it’s uncensored, because there’s some stuff over the scanner that is pretty traumatic.”

Many times, he or others will reach out to law enforcement directly “if there’s any kind of iffy stuff. We don’t want to be a tabloid newspaper.”

The site also has a no-politics policy, he said.

“We don’t like the rumor mill, because we find a lot around here that people want to put in 10 cents, and sometimes that 10 cents isn’t a whole dime, right?” Causer

said. “It doesn’t add up. I always tell people, just because it’s said on the scanner doesn’t mean it’s true.”

Causer said he tries to make the page a welcoming environment, with a respect for law enforcement and other emergency responders.

“Sometimes it’s hard because you get in these little mood swings, where people start to fight over politics and over anything,” he said. “Whatever happened to agree to disagree?”

Causer said he always tries to keep it civil. “We don’t want people to get attacked. We always try to come to terms: ‘Is it beneficial or is it going to be more destructive for the community?’ It has to be handled in a very ethical manner. To have 13,000 people that want to come check out our page, it’s an honor.

“I also find it has a lot of responsibility with it.”

OP-ED

Time to acknowledge the true cost of misinformation: delaying construction of a new Gearhart fire station

GUEST COLUMN

BRENT WARREN



As a result of two people filing a court complaint regarding ballot title language, Gearhart voters have been robbed of our chance to vote on bond financing on this November’s ballot. The judge found absolutely no merit in any of the issues presented, but as a result of this tactic the vote has been delayed and costs continue to increase.

Over the years, several locations have been proposed and each effort has been met with a campaign of “alternative facts”. Gearhart citizens need to rely on credible sources, such as the city’s website and blog, instead of social media posts by those seeking to become “influencers” to the detriment of our community and its reputation.

The resources first responders need to keep themselves and our community safe is something only we the voters can decide. We, the voters, chart the course for our community. When these decisions are taken away from us, we’re no longer living in a democracy.

Supporting Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department is a point of pride among community

members. These are the people we depend on to keep us safe, putting their lives at risk for you around the clock, every day. Many have had interactions with our volunteers and are grateful to them for keeping us safe.

Oregon’s coastal communities have been educating their citizens and visitors for years regarding the need to prepared for a tsunami. Gearhart continues to prepare with CERT volunteers, supply caches, Shake Out events, evacuation signage, etc. Another critical component is the community’s ongoing effort to build a fire station engineered to survive earthquakes and located outside of the tsunami zone.

A 5% increase in construction costs would result in an additional \$500,000. Bond interest rates are at an all-time low and the only direction is up. Even a 1/2% interest rate bump would increase costs to taxpayers of more than \$1 million over a 30 year bond term. But these are only financial costs, trivial to any loss of life in our community.

Let’s look at some of the “alternative facts” and counterpoint with truth:

- Initial and continuing education of firefighters is critical. One of the features in our new fire station has consistently been a training room for our volunteers. However, those opposed

have changed the language to be “increased space for a regional training program,” implying Gearhart was somehow subsidizing other fire jurisdictions.

- Many volunteer fire departments have sleeping quarters in their stations. Why? Sleeping facilities allow on-duty emergency medical technicians and firefighters to respond quicker to emergencies. However, those opposed have mischaracterized this feature as evidence that Gearhart is moving away from a volunteer to a full-time paid fire department.

- The memory of a heroic Gearhart volunteer firefighter who gave his life attempting to save a person in the ocean was used to argue against providing training and rescue equipment to our volunteers. However, the truth is we already have six volunteers undergoing training/certification for water rescue and we already own the equipment.

- A professional construction engineering company provided estimates for building a 13,000-square-foot fire and police station at just over \$10 million, with another \$900k for two independent access driveways. All construction projects have “contingency” line items for handling unforeseen costs. While 8% to 10% contingency is typical, ours is 20% and hopefully will not be required.

The \$11 million budget plus \$2 million contingency equals the amount of the bond vote request “up to \$13 million.” If we are successful in grants and donations, the bond amount could be reduced. However, the opposition mischaracterizes the cost as “upwards of \$13 million.”

- It has been suggested the Seaside Fire Department, Medix and the U.S. Coast Guard are sufficient to safeguard our community. Gearhart’s brave and dedicated volunteers are demeaned by statements like this. While we work closely with Seaside and provide mutual aid, the current Seaside fire station is also vulnerable to earthquake and tsunami. In a major disaster, it is highly unlikely Seaside would be able to respond. Despite the expertise of our Coast Guard, their limited resources will not be sufficient to cover the Pacific coastline. Medix does not have the training or equipment to safely cut people out of a vehicle accident or deal with hazardous waste.

Please join me in giving thanks and gratitude to Gearhart’s selfless first responders and support the bond funding necessary for Gearhart to keep our community members safe.

Brent Warren is a Gearhart City Council member. He is writing as a resident.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

TUESDAY, OCT. 5

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

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

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

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 6

Gearhart City Council, 7 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

THURSDAY, OCT. 7

Seaside Parks Advisory Committee, 6 p.m., 989 Broadway.

MONDAY, OCT. 11

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., cityofseaside.us.

TUESDAY, OCT. 12

Gearhart City Council, special meeting, contractor hours, 6 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

THURSDAY, OCT. 14

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

Gearhart Planning Commission, 6 p.m., cityofgearhart.com.

TUESDAY, OCT. 19

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., work session, 989 Broadway.

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

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 20

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

THURSDAY, OCT. 21

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

MONDAY, OCT. 25

Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., cityofseaside.us.



PUBLISHER
Kari Borger

EDITOR
R.J. Marx

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Shannon Arlint
ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER
Sarah Silver-Tecza

PRODUCTION MANAGER
John D. Bruijn
SYSTEMS MANAGER
Carl Earl

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Skyler Archibald
Joshua Heineman
Katherine Lacaze
Esther Moberg

Seaside Signal

The Seaside Signal is published every other week by EO Media Group, 1555 N. Roosevelt, Seaside, OR 97138. 503-738-5561 seasidejournal.com Copyright © 2021 Seaside Signal. Nothing can be reprinted or copied without consent of the owners.

Letter policy

The Seaside Signal welcomes letters to the editor. The deadline is noon Monday prior to publication. Letters must be 400 words or less and must be signed by the author and include a phone number for verification. We also request that submissions be limited to one letter per month. Send to 1555 N. Roosevelt Drive, Seaside, OR 97138, drop them off at 1555 N. Roosevelt Drive or fax to 503-738-9285, or email rmarx@seasidejournal.com

Subscriptions

Annually: \$51.00, monthly autopay is \$4.25
E-Edition only: \$4 a month

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Seaside Signal, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103. Postage Paid at Seaside, OR, 97138 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 2021 by the Seaside Signal. No portion of this newspaper may be reproduced without written permission. All rights reserved.