

**SignalViewpoints**

# Ruby's is a piece of Americana in Seaside

**SEEN FROM SEASIDE**

R.J. MARX



Think of Ruby's Roadside Grill in Seaside and you are immediately transported to a piece of Americana. The former gas station saw a transformation to the 1950s-style diner when Candace and David Remer put their signature touch on the menu and design. Nestled off U.S. Highway 101 near Avenue U, it offers what they describe as "the best burgers on the planet — and then some."

That may not be so far from the truth. The quality menu features both the predictable (Ruby's chili, wings and burger baskets) and then the not-so-predictable, like the Sleepy Monk burger and Chicago dog, as true to any Chicago-style hot dog on the Oregon Coast, with mustard, dill relish, tomato, pepperoncini, pickle spear, onions and celery salt. "We don't do fast food, per se, but we do great food fast, quickly," David Remer said.

On Fridays they offer prime rib, inspired by the former Bigfoot's restaurant next door — but beware, they often sell out, so call ahead.

"I used to take my little grand-girls next door to Bigfoot's Steakhouse. A customer came in one day and said, 'You know, Bigfoot's is closing, where can I get prime rib?' The chef at the time loved the idea of smoking and roasting meats, so we took it on. And it has been our blockbuster," David Remer said.

The Remers purchased the property in 2015 and Ruby's Roadside Grill opened in 2016. They spent a fortune in renovation, adding a breezeway, double doors, new floors and a vaulted ceiling. Since then they've added picnic tables, outdoor seating, games and a fire pit. "I wanted to do something to add a little decor to south Seaside," David Remer said.

He said he fought the urge for just another fast food burger place, modeling his restaurant on California-style burger barns, with an anti-corporate, anti-assembly line vibe.



Dogs are their brand, and the top dog for the Remers is Ruby herself, the restaurant's namesake. A black Labrador retriever,

Ruby is now 10 and remains the face of the restaurant. She also travels everywhere with the couple. "I love dogs," David Remer



Photos by R.J. Marx

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Interior of Ruby's in Seaside. Ruby, who proved the inspiration for Ruby's in Seaside. Ruby's merchandise on display at the counter. Counter service at Ruby's.**

said. "We're actually a little over the top with dogs."

While dogs aren't allowed inside the restaurant, there is a canine cabana where pets and their owners can dine outside around a heated charcoal fire. You can even get your dog a 2-ounce beef patty, 5-ounce chicken breast or an all-beef hot dog for \$2 each.

Ruby's also offers a highly-curated selection of local craft beers, including Ruby's Good Girl Ale. Named after you know who.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**To the friends of Rod Nichols**

To friends of Rod Nichols: I personally do not have many friends. I prefer it that way, but to lose one friend is staggering.

Rod Nichols recently died at home, in bed with his faithful dog, "Spud," curled up beside him. How do you tell others of a special friend? I thought of him as a hero without a cape.

Rod introduced me to the Chicago Cubs, and how they could take over Wrigley Field. In turn, I introduced him to Russell Wilson and the Seattle Seahawks. We laughed at the oddities of the sports we saw; crabbed at the sometimes ineptness of coaches and officials; but cheered loudly when our teams played well and won.

Rod helped so many. Helping some through his commitment to bring fresh produce to Astoria through the North Coast Food Web and others through the senior meals program. He never bragged, and yet he had so much to give.

But the Rod I knew also loved painting, sketching and all the arts. Every Sunday, Rod would sit in our upright plaid chair with dog, Spud, curled on a pillow within reach, to watch sports on TV and eat lunch or dinner.

We compared notes on sports and art as only a fine friend can do. It was such a precious time to have a friend who cares what you think, and feels OK about sharing feelings and insights about subjects we both loved ... art and sports.

Thank you, Rod. My life is better for having known you. A friend, indeed.

Mary Covington Gearhart

**Homeless is a consequence, not a cause**

Over the last several years I have been deeply troubled by actions and comments from many citizens on a host of issues including the homeless population.

In 1948 the United States signed an agreement with the United Nations indicating housing as a right under resolution 217 A. The United States has not lived up to their agreement. There are many reasons people become homeless. Mental health, drug abuse, criminal history, divorce, low income, high debt, monopolies, and market manipulation (these are the causes), and we have done a really poor job addressing them. Finland has a policy called "Hous-

ing First" and since initiating it, they have reduced the numbers of their homeless population substantially. It's based on getting people into a stable housing situation then addressing the cause, it appears to work.

Before someone should be recalled based on a decision to provide a homeless area. You might want to know, it's illegal to criminalize homelessness. In a federal court ruling against the city of Portland. "Criminally punishing homeless people for sleeping on the street when they have nowhere else to go is inhumane" it was found to violate the eighth amendment. The U.N, 1948 Resolution and the federal court ruling, is requiring cities across the nation to find solutions for the problem, by providing houses, and camps during certain hours, times, and locations.

Troy Prouty McMinnville

**Former legislator asks vote for Thompson**

I have known Lianne Thompson for years, including the eight years she has served on the County Commission. Her background in all levels of government enables her to hit the ground running and not spend precious time learning the system. Her experience is broad and adequate to her to continue the job in which she has served two terms and speaks well to the level of confidence in her abilities the citizens have.

As the state representative in House District 32 I worked with her extensively on emergency preparedness and was grateful to have her input on the Oregon Resilience Plan as it was being developed into legislation. She spent countless hours educating herself on the issues and as a result became one of the most prepared public servants in Oregon.

Her support and hard work on statewide issues that affect us all was integral to ensuring cooperation among all levels of government on those issues that affect our communities here in Clatsop County including homelessness, the need for more childcare services, and more affordable housing for our workers and seniors.

Lianne understands how to get things done and her accomplishments are admirable. She has worked tirelessly with all the players to bring broadband to the rural areas of the county and her work on water policy is timely as we deal with continuous drought conditions and hotter summers that threaten our forests and farmlands.

I am pleased to support Lianne for Clatsop County Commission District 5.

Deborah Boone Cannon Beach

**Show your gratitude, vote yes**

Humans excel in environments where they receive support and appreciation. The police and fire personnel work very hard to protect the citizens in the city of Gearhart. I would ask our citizens to show their gratitude by voting for the new fire and police station bond. We need to let them know they are valued.

Sharon Kloepfer Gearhart

**Gearhart mayors endorse bond measure**

As mayors of Gearhart, we've had a "front row seat" towards the goal of a new fire station for Gearhart. It has been a very long and arduous process!

In 1958, the Gearhart firefighters volunteered their time and skill to build a fire station for the city. It looks very much the same today. That is, until you take a closer look. The concrete holding the cinder blocks together is crumbling. The building will likely collapse in an earthquake.

In 2006 Mayor Kent Smith was able to put a \$3.75 million bond measure on the ballot for a fire station/city hall (at the current site). The bond failed by 96 votes. Since that vote was taken, much has been learned about the Cascadia Subduction Zone and the earthquakes and tsunamis it can create. Coastal cities, including Gearhart, began efforts to improve resiliency following a disaster.

In 2015, a citizen's fire station committee was formed by Mayor Dianne Widdop. The group evaluated nine alternatives. The recommendation of the committee was to build on the eastern half of Dunes Meadow Park.

The public outcry was loud, and clearly against moving the station to the park. Next, a homeowner expressed interest in selling property located at 13th and Marion (High Point) for a station. After public education, a community survey was done asking the public to choose a site, ranking the current location first, the park second and High Point third.

As a result of the survey, the High Point location was the No. 1 choice.

Mayor Matt Brown also gained unanimous City Council support for eliminating

the park as a location.

In 2019 the City Council adopted Ordinance 924 which created a tsunami overlay zone for land use planning in the city, as recommended by the state of Oregon. This ordinance limits both density and prohibits critical infrastructure built in the tsunami zone. The council again voted unanimously to focus all efforts on High Point.

Unfortunately in 2021, the High Point owners withdrew their offer of sale of the property.

Later in 2021, Cockrum and the council learned of the availability of land at one of the original locations studied, near Highlands Lane. The new owners are requesting annexation of this property into the city. In exchange, the owners agreed to transfer ownership of 4.5 acres of land to the city for a fire/police station and a park. At an elevation of 70 feet, the proposed site is on some of the highest ground in the area. This land is adjacent to the city, and a natural place for Gearhart to grow.

The time is now. The longer we wait, the more this facility will cost. Worse, it could cost more if we do nothing now, experience a disaster and relief efforts are compromised!

*Measure 4-213 is supported by Gearhart's current and past Mayors: Paulina Cockrum, Matt Brown, Dianne Widdop and Kent Smith.*

**Mayberry, where did you go?**

As anyone who has been at the coast for a number of years can attest, Gearhart has changed. The entire Northwest Coast has changed. Families are moving here from other locations far and wide bringing a new richness to the area. Traffic is heavier, the population is growing, services are strained from demand, and the number of calls received by our selfless police officers and volunteer firefighters continues to increase.

Change is unavoidable in life. There's an old saying that "if you don't change you die." People are constantly adapting, growing, and evolving how they view the world. Nostalgia is a wonderful thing. It offers comfort, warm memories and familiarity. But nostalgia doesn't save lives.

Acknowledging that we're a growing community with complex needs, particularly in regards to keeping our community and citizens safe is critical. Our emergency response volunteers deserve updated,

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