

# Town hall: Merkley, Bonamici touch on LNG issue, fracking

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“Now that we see fracking in full force, we have a huge problem with fugitive methane gas that escapes. Methane is a very potent global warming gas. By some estimates now, natural gas is equivalent to coal in terms of its global warming impact,” he said. “My basic feeling is, we should have a ‘go slow’ strategy, in part so we can understand the science.”

Josie Peper, of Astoria, wondered if the Lower Columbia River estuary could be granted federal protection as a National Scenic Area, like the Columbia River Gorge, to avoid environmentally unsound projects altogether.

Merkley said he does not view federal protection status as “a good fit for the Astoria area, where there’s economic development to be undertaken.”

However, he is working with other Northwestern states — Washington, Idaho and Montana — to create legislation that would provide for the river’s “protection and decontamination,” he said.

## Cannon Beach Academy

Jacob Dewey, 8, the ho-



ERICK BENGEL — EO Media Group  
Sen. Jeff Merkley speaks with Josie Peper, of Astoria, after the town hall meeting the senator held Friday in Cannon Beach with U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici. In the background, Bonamici mingles with her staff and constituents.

meschooled son of Kellye and Ryan Dewey, of Cannon Beach, told the elected officials, “We need a school in Cannon Beach. I want to know how you can help us with that.”

In June 2013, the Seaside School District closed Cannon Beach Elementary School and transferred its students to Seaside Heights Elementary School. Since then, a grassroots movement to set up a charter school, the Cannon Beach Academy, has taken shape, with the school’s organizers

now aiming for a fall 2016 opening.

Though the federal government doesn’t directly help communities build schools, Merkley said it may be possible for some Federal Emergency Management Agency funds to help finance the academy since new schools must be located outside the tsunami inundation zone.

Bonamici noted that, because the academy would be a public charter school, additional funds might be available. “So we’ll be



ERICK BENGEL — EO Media Group  
Rep. Suzanne Bonamici talks with a constituent after the town hall forum she conducted last week with Sen. Jeff Merkley.

looking into that as well, because we’d like to help you get a school,” she said.

## Other concerns

• Nadia Gardner, of Arch Cape, asked about the possibility of fully funding and permanently reauthorizing the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program, which provides funds and grants to regional conservation projects throughout the country. The fund expires in September.

Merkley said he will use his position on the Committee on Appropriations to

advocate for the continued funding of the program.

• Roberta Basch, cultural adviser to the Clatsop-Nehalem Confederated Tribes, asked for Merkley and Bonamici’s support in restoring federal recognition to the tribe. She said the tribe would then be given rights to allow them to preserve both their culture and sites sacred to them for future generations.

Bonamici, who introduced a bill in the last Congress to restore the tribe’s federal recognition, said she

will continue to work on the issue.

However, “I just want to be realistic and say that there wasn’t much appetite on the other side of the aisle to even move the bill into a hearing,” she added. “Restoring rights to a tribe is a big process. It takes time.”

• Ed Johnson, a Cannon Beach resident, expressed concern that the state had bypassed Cannon Beach’s residents last month, when the Oregon Department of Transportation removed about 30 trees 8 inches or more in diameter from U.S. Highway 101’s scenic byway. Because the trees were in a state right of way, ODOT was legally able to carry out the project without first obtaining a city permit.

Merkley said his staff will look into the issue to see where among the different levels of government coordination may be possible on future tree-removal projects.

Bonamici added she would work with Merkley’s office and those of state representatives “on better coordination to make sure that the local needs are more recognized.”

# Livar: ‘We’re dealing in a world where we are a minority’

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## Overcoming obstacles

Livar, 51, was born and raised in San Antonio and earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and a master’s degree in spirituality from Santa Clara University in California.

A former chaplain at Baptist Health System in San Antonio, she has also served as a chemical dependency counselor for parolees, a public educator for a sexual assault crisis center, and an advocate for job training.

Livar is an instructor for Clatsop Community College’s Lives in Transition program, which helps prepare adults, including single mothers and workers who have lost their jobs, to complete their education.

Livar, who is on the steering committee for the Lower Columbia Diversity Project, wants to instill a sense of empowerment among Hispanics and lower the obstacles to community participation.

She is cognizant, though, that some activism might be seen as “crossing boundaries” by the community. “We’re dealing in a world where we are a minority,” she said. “And we want to continue to make strides and, at the same time, there’s an acknowledgment that we’re not always encouraged to take that lead.”

“And what do we do when we have those kinds of obstacles, in our personal lives, professional lives or as we’re trying to help others?”

—Derrick DePledge



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

William Mueller, from Astoria Parks and Recreation, hangs signs along the Astoria Riverwalk warning people to stay away from sea lions Friday.

# Sea lions: ‘They can be quite dangerous’

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The wily pinnipeds are regulars in Astoria, drawn by smelt and salmon. Unusually warm water tem-

peratures and a lack of food in California appear to have expanded the sea lion invasion this year, luring tourists while causing nuisances along the docks.

Sea lions are a popular attraction at Buoy Beer, where a glass floor offers customers close-up views of the barking beasts.

Angela Cosby, the city’s

Parks and Recreation director, warns against getting too close. “They can be quite dangerous,” she said. “And they can move extremely quickly, too.”

# March for Babies is May 2 in Astoria

May 2 at Maritime Memorial Park in Astoria, families and business leaders will join together in the March of Dimes annual March for Babies, the nation’s oldest walk fundraiser honoring babies born healthy and those who need help to survive and thrive. Joining will be local businesses, including Columbia Memorial Hospital, Providence Seaside Hospital, Columbia Bank and Clatsop

Community Bank. Registration begins at 8 a.m. with the 5K walk kicking off at 9 a.m. Join the walk and begin fundraising at [www.marchforbabies.org](http://www.marchforbabies.org)

Funds raised by March for Babies in Oregon and Southwest Washington support prenatal wellness programs, research grants, information for families experiencing a newborn intensive care unit

hospitalization and advocacy efforts for stronger, healthier babies. Premature birth is the most urgent infant health problem in the U.S. It affects nearly 500,000 babies each year, including 4,264 in Oregon.

March of Dimes has provided research, education, vaccines and other services for more than 75 years. Find out more at [marchforbabies.org](http://marchforbabies.org). Locally, March for Babies is

sponsored by First Tech Federal Credit Union, Big 5, CMH, Providence Seaside, Columbia Bank and Clatsop Community Bank. The 2015 March for Babies is sponsored nationally by the March of Dimes’ top corporate supporters, including Kmart, Famous Footwear, Macy’s, Cigna, United Airlines and Mission Pharmacal.

# Suspect: Three people were injured in the assault

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Astoria Police obtained felony warrants for Lane’s arrest for charges of first-degree robbery, second-degree assault, and first-degree burglary.

Lane is considered armed and dangerous, police said.

If anyone knows Lane’s location, notify law enforcement immediately.

Three people were injured in the assault at gunpoint. Astoria Police initially responded at 8:25 a.m. Friday to a report of someone shot at the apartment. When officers arrived, no one was shot, but two men had been assaulted at gunpoint and had significant head and body injuries.

A third person suffered in-

juries from a chemical spray that was discharged in the house at the time of the assaults.

Officers discovered at least two suspects, one possibly Lane, entered the house and assaulted the occupants at gunpoint. They struck the two assault victims with firearms and batons and took items from the home, according to police.

The suspects fled the scene in an Oldsmobile Bravada with Oregon license plate 913ARU. One of the people in the car was believed to be a possible hostage. However, police said, the reported hostage was never in the vehicle and had fled the apartment before police arrived because she had a warrant. She was

later located and arrested for the warrant.

At 8:48 a.m. Friday, a Seaside detective found the Oldsmobile Bravada at Arnie’s Cafe in Warrenton, but the vehicle was unoccupied.

Astoria Police, Warrenton Police and the Clatsop County Sheriff’s Office found several people believed to be related to the incident Friday, and eventually identified Lane as a suspect.

The Astoria Police Department is continuing to investigate and follow up on leads.

Anyone with information about Friday’s incident or the whereabouts of Lane can contact Astoria Police at 503-325-4411 or Detective Nicole Riley at [nriley@astoria.or.us](mailto:nriley@astoria.or.us)

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Baxter Family Medicine joins CMH Primary Clinic April 20, 2015

Kevin Baxter, DO, and Jan Monroe, FNP, are pleased to be joining the CMH Primary Care Clinic team. They will begin seeing patients at the clinic in Warrenton at 1639 SE Ensign Lane, Suite B103, on April 20.

This change allows Kevin Baxter, DO, and Jan Monroe, FNP, to focus on caring for their patients instead of running a business. Their patients will enjoy the same care and services that they have previously. For more information or to make an appointment, call 503-338-4500.

