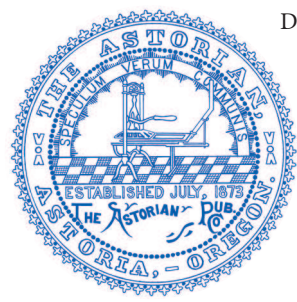


THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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SHOUTOUTS AND CALLOUTS

Today we debut a new staple to our Friday Opinion page with the addition of Shoutouts and Callouts, which will focus on highlighting people and organizations deserving of applause for the good things they do for our communities and residents, and to others deserving to be called out for their actions. Previously, a weekly Writer's Notebook offering occupied our Opinion page, and readers can now find that feature on the cover of our revamped "C" section, now called Weekend Break. That section, which we hope will grow, is aimed at focusing on things to help you kick-back, relax and to enjoy the entire weekend.

Shoutouts

In our first installment, Shoutouts go to:

- **Kevin Leahy**, for his work in trying to bring local leaders together to address a variety of regional issues. Leahy, the executive director of Clatsop Economic Development Resources and the Clatsop Community College Small Business Development Center, is spearheading ongoing efforts to get community leaders to the table to address the housing issues of availability and affordability that the region faces. While there isn't any quick fix for the problem, long-term strategies can be developed. The "Housing Crunch" will be fully detailed in a five-day series beginning Monday in The Daily Astorian.

- **Flora Lee Law**, who turned 90 this week and had planned to participate for the first time in the Great Columbia Crossing with a contingent of about 35 relatives and friends. This past weekend's storms forced the cancellation of the 10-kilometer trek across the scenic Astoria Bridge, and we hope organizers will reschedule the event in the near future so Law can get that chance.

- **Vintage Hardware**, which reopened at a new location along Marine Drive in downtown Astoria, after being displaced from the former Englund Marine & Supply Building at the foot of 15th Street where a new Mo's Restaurant is now going into that space. Becky Johnson and Paul Tuter are co-owners of the store, which is known not only for its old building supplies, but for also repurposing some of the old supplies into new pieces of art.

- **Area 4H members and their families** who took time out recently to bring smiles and the Halloween spirit to Clatsop Care Center where they carved pumpkins and spent time chatting and bringing cheer to the residents.

Callouts

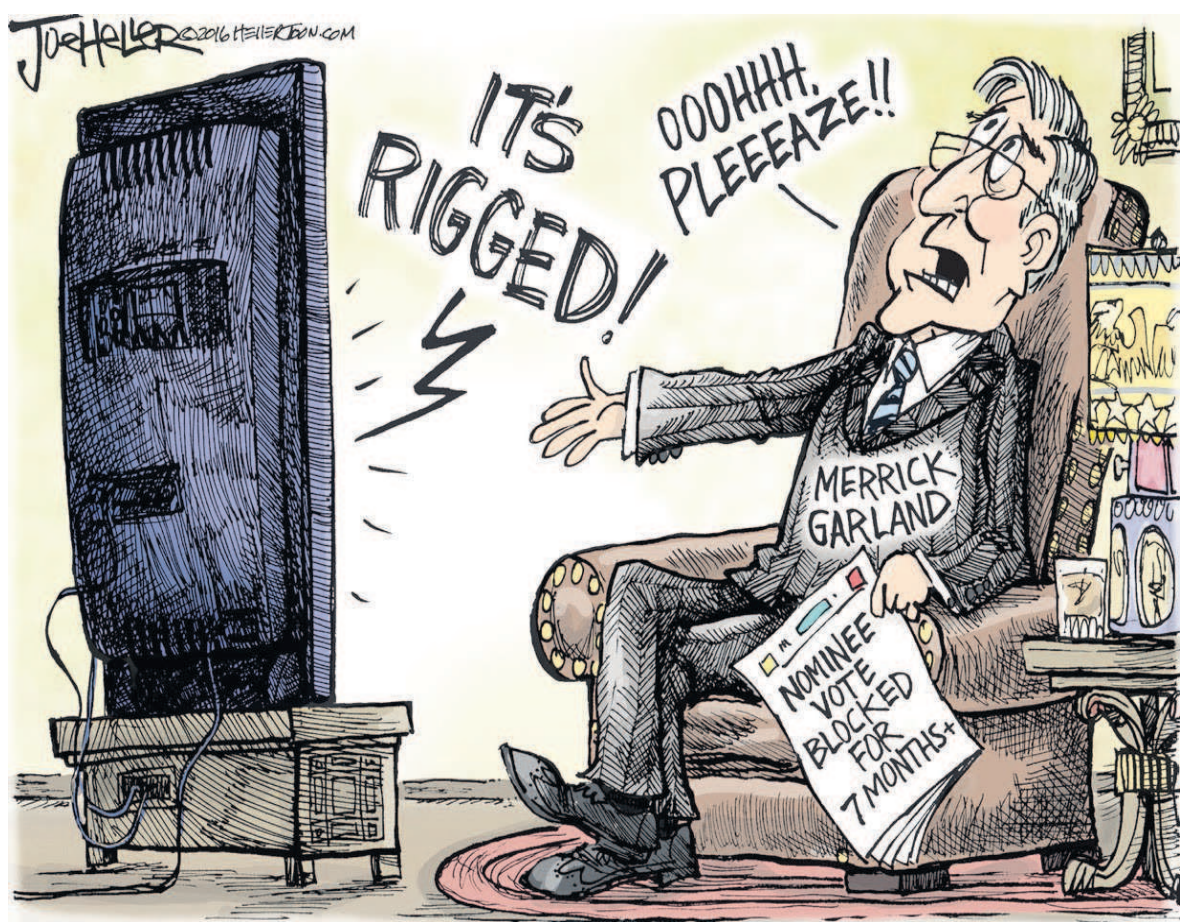
And Callouts go to:

- **Anyone who didn't register to vote** in the upcoming election. This past Tuesday was the county's registration deadline, and people who passed up that responsibility and opportunity and thus their right to vote in the November general election don't have much of a leg to stand on when they complain about the federal, state and local results when they chose not to participate in the democratic process.

- **Misguided Portland residents and others** who made light on Twitter and other online outlets with jokes and memes about last weekend's storm that wasn't as intense as expected. While the storm didn't pack as big of a punch as predicted, especially inland in the valley, it did cause enough damage along the coast to affect the economic livelihoods of residents in several areas. If those people who lit up Twitter with their sarcasm about the storm had been the ones affected by the damage, they wouldn't think it's so funny.

Suggestions

Do you have a Shoutout or Callout you think we should know about? Let us know at news@dailyastorian.com and we'll make sure to take a look.



The debate in one scary answer

By GAIL COLLINS
New York Times News Service

OK, Donald Trump won't promise to accept the results of the election. That's truly ... good grief.

"I will tell you at the time. ... I'll keep you in suspense," he told Wednesday's debate moderator, Chris Wallace. The word "rigged" came up. Yow.

Hillary Clinton noted that Trump tends to presume that whenever he



loses anything, the system was rigged: "There was even a time when he didn't get an Emmy for his TV program three years in a row and he started tweeting that the Emmys were rigged."

"I should have gotten it," Trump retorted.

This is obviously what we should have known was coming when the host of "The Celebrity Apprentice" wound up as a presidential nominee. But jeppers, people, this is serious. Trump was refusing to acknowledge it was even possible for him to lose a fair fight. At one point, he announced the election was rigged because Hillary Clinton was in it. ("She should never have been allowed to run for the presidency based on what she did with emails.")

Overshadowing

The rigged-election moment overshadowed everything else in the debate, during which Trump made very strange faces while Clinton was talking, but did manage to avoid going completely off the rails. Does that make him a success? We are once again faced with the problem of the very, very low bar. Still, no.

He did manage, particularly in the early part of the debate,

to ignore Clinton's effort to get his goat. When she claimed he "choked" at his meeting with the president of Mexico, he kept pretty calm. Although Trump did observe, weirdly, that when it came to immigration, under President Barack Obama "millions of people have been moved out of this country. ... She doesn't want to say that, but that's what's happened ... big league." Is moving people out not the whole Trump plan?

They also had a whopping argument about — guess who? Vladimir Putin! "Putin from everything I see has no respect for this person," Trump said, referring to Clinton. The fight went on for a while, until she cannily managed to divert the discussion to the possibility of placing Trump's "finger on the nuclear button."

OK, two critical takeaways. Trump won't promise to concede if he loses, and if he wins, he gets control of the nukes. These are the only things you need to think about for the next 2 1/2 weeks.

We have been down this debate road before, and we knew before the evening started that when Trump was asked about groping women, he'd deny everything, blame it on Hillary Clinton and then bring up the emails. And that when the emails came up, Clinton would mention the way Trump insulted John McCain's war record, the Mexican-American judge and the parents of the dead war hero.

"Such a nasty woman," Trump said at one point. As the debate went on, he got more sullen, his expressions stranger. One of the things we have now learned for sure, three debates running, is that he has a serious stamina problem.

Clinton

Hillary Clinton has many faults. She tends to give long, rather boring answers. She has never learned how

to deal with the email question. But the woman is an absolute rock in these long-running, high-stress critical encounters.

Also, she made it very clear that she would accept the results of the election, even if she lost. God help us all.

Clinton was not particularly good in defending the Clinton Foundation. However, it did seem fair for her to point out that Trump used some of his own foundation's money to purchase a 6-foot portrait of himself. ("Who does that?")

But what difference did it all make? The man wouldn't promise to concede if he loses. Later on CNN, his campaign manager said Trump would indeed accept the results "because he's going to win the election." This was not particularly reassuring.

If you were totally ignoring the entire event, you might want to know that nobody shook hands, that it took Clinton an hour to mention that Trump had never released his tax returns, and that whenever she pointed out that he had purchased the very same Chinese steel and aluminum he complained was ruining the economy, he said that it was her fault for not changing the laws.

She did bring up the Miss-Universe-is-fat moment, and Trump said "give me a break."

He promised to run the country "the way I run my company," and a great part of the listening public contemplated the fact that this is a guy who's declared bankruptcy six times. But we've already forgotten all about it.

Only one thing matters. The man says he won't promise to accept the results of the election. All those establishment Republicans who've been hoping to get through this ordeal by just being quiet and looking sad have got some work to do. Fast.

GUEST COLUMN

Happy trails to longtime cross country coach, mentor

By CHARLIE KANZIG
For The Daily Astorian

I got an email from my good friend Neil Branson, a longtime cross country and track coach in Oregon, mainly at Seaside High School, announcing his retirement from cross country. He and I had talked recently, so the email was not a surprise, yet seeing it in writing made it even more real and gave me pause to consider the deep impact this man has had in my life as a coach and as a person.

When I was a high school runner at Stayton High, I largely trained myself because my coach, though a great guy, did not adhere to any particular regimen designed to enhance performance. I had a passion to do well, so I read Runner's World, talked to runners from other schools, and simply ran a ton of miles. My efforts never quite got me to my dream of being a district champion and running at the state meet and that left me hungry to learn more about quality training as I headed for college.

When I arrived at the University of Oregon in fall 1978, the Ducks were in the middle of an era of having a number of Olympic-level run-

ners on the cross country and track teams including Alberto Salazar, Bill McChesney and Rudy Chapa, so there was no real use in me even going to the open practices coach Bill Dellinger allowed unattached runners like me to attend. I spoke to him one day about it and he said that runners like me would come to these workouts for a while and overextend themselves trying to keep up with the elite runners and end up discouraged and injured. His advice was to train on my own and find road races and other open meets in the area.

So that's what I did, but I still itching to learn more about training and had developed a desire to one day be a cross country and track coach.

Two characters

I had met Neil Branson about two years earlier through another friend of mine named Mike Bauer, who was a teacher and running coach at Regis High School in Stayton. Neil would occasionally visit Mike and join us for training runs and local races.

These two characters, both 13 years my senior, had met during high school in Eugene and were following similar paths, as Neil was also teaching high school and coaching runners.

The first American "running boom" was in full swing and many people became enchanted with running marathons. I had run my first one as a senior in high school and basically stayed in marathon shape year-round in college, completing eight marathons during that time.

During my first year in college, Neil was teaching and coaching at Illinois Valley High School

in Cave Junction and arranged to run with me on a visit to Eugene. He also wanted me to meet a couple of runners he had coached at Illinois Valley who were attending Lane Community College.

During that visit, Neil took down my address and the first letter from him arrived a few weeks later. I don't recall exactly the contents, but I clearly remember it included words of encouragement, mention of some



Neil Branson

adventure he was undertaking, and an invitation to keep in touch.

This is a practice he has continued to this day. In fact, I just received a letter from him last week even though I had just seen him the week before and would see him again the week after at cross country meets.

During my college years and beyond, Neil and I shared many running adventures, including some crazy relay runs across Oregon and to other far-flung destinations. I started coaching at age 19 and finally found in Neil Branson and Mike Bauer, mentors worth emulating. I see it as no accident that my career has matched these two. All of us are school counselors and longtime distance coaches.

Coaching together

One miraculous highlight of my friendship with Neil came when I applied for the counseling job here in Sisters in 1994. True to his helpful self, Neil had long ago told me that I could always use him as a reference for jobs. I had done this for the Sisters job, but didn't tell Neil. The short version of this story is that Neil had also applied for the job and, in the end, we were both hired. We spent a year here

together in Sisters, counseling and coaching, before Neil was drawn back to Seaside.

To this day I treasure that school year with my "Jedi master." His care and concern for individual students combined with his gift of bringing people together and fostering a genuinely caring, integrity-laced team culture is a model of how educators and coaches should conduct their lives.

So, it's bittersweet to see Neil Branson retire. He's been living a parallel existence with me for well over 30 years. He has certainly left a legacy of genuine goodwill and sportsmanship, as well as a contagious love for the sport of cross country.

Personally, Neil Branson has taught me the transformative power of simple acts of kindness and the tremendous value of speaking life into others. This is how he lives his life. How lucky are all the high school kids he has coached and counseled. How fortunate are those who have coached alongside him. How blessed are those of us who call him our friend.

Thank you, Neil. Well done. All the best in your future adventures!