

Voter's pamphlet

Do you find it difficult to obtain factual information about candidates in local elections when there is no voter's pamphlet? Would you like to have a voter's pamphlet for the May 2015 election? It could happen, but your help is needed.

The Clatsop County Elections Office has sent a letter to the 39 districts participating in the May 2015 election, asking them if they would like to help fund the publication. The letters provide an estimate the cost to each district, which is apportioned by the number of voters. The total cost in 1999 was \$15,000, or an average of \$384 per district — a small price to pay for a foundational component of democracy.

Please contact the boards in the May election and ask them to support the publication of a voter's pamphlet. The boards include the Port of Astoria, Clatsop Community College, the school districts, the Sunset Empire Transportation District, among many others. If you know board members, give them a call. The response from the boards to the Election's Office must be received by Feb. 6.

Clatsop County last published a voter's pamphlet for odd-year elections in 1999. Clatsop County Interim Elections Clerk Valerie Crafard said the county stopped publishing the voter's pamphlet because there was no demand.

However, without a voter's pamphlet, the electorate is left to the discretion of the local newspapers or whatever campaign literature the candidates choose to distribute.

"Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education."

— Franklin D. Roosevelt
LARRY TAYLOR
chairman, Clatsop
County
Democratic Central
Committee

Logs encroaching

I am concerned over the degradation of the environment at Smith Point in Astoria owing to the expansion of the log-sorting operation and the creation of a truck-servicing yard there.

I have walked my dog there twice a day for more than two years. I have noticed a wide variety of creatures in the grassy meadow near the tip of Smith Point and the adjoining wetland. Many birds frequent the area, including a small shore bird — something like a sanderling — that nests in the grass and complains when I walk by. It bravely attempts to lure me away from the meadow side of the Riverwalk where the nests are.

Great blue herons overnight in the tall grass.

At various times of the year, Canada geese and a variety of ducks and terns inhabit the area. At least one eagle fishes from the area.

Thank you, Astoria City Council

During the Astoria City Council meeting Tuesday, the approximately five-year-long controversy over where to prosecute Astoria's Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants (DUI) offenders was brought to an end. By a vote of 4-1, Astoria Police officers will now cite DUI offenders into Circuit Court, as do all other law enforcement officers in Clatsop County.

Thank you, Councilor Drew Herzog, who was elected in 2012 after campaigning to end this controversy and who was the lone voice on council advocating that position — until now.

Thank you newly elected Councilors Zetty Nemlowill and Cindy Price, who each also campaigned in favor of ending this controversy, and voted in accordance with

their stated positions.

Thank you newly elected Mayor Arline LaMear, who cast the toughest vote. LaMear read a prepared statement at the beginning of the discussion in which she first listed arguments in favor of keeping DUI prosecution in Astoria Municipal Court, but then went on to explain that she had become convinced it was in the best interest of Astoria to put this behind us, and that this was an important part of her wish to be inclusive in her administration.

I believe the council's decision was the right one, for many reasons. Therefore, thank you all, for putting public service first and foremost.

SHEL CANTOR
Astoria

Many amphibians live there, a chorus of frogs each twilight.

Thousands of slugs and snails help to keep the meadow clean.

Small groups of deer occasionally browse there.

It has been a place rich in life.

Since the expansion of the log-sorting operation and the addition of the truck-service yard (which has become a mud hole), I have seen almost none of the critters I met there.

The logs keep encroaching on the meadow and the wetland. Heavy log-handling vehicles are stored on the wetland.

Now, a large number of huge pipes (I believe they are dredge pipes) have been moved onto the meadow and the wetland, further reducing the inhabitable space while likely killing little critters that were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The Port of Astoria should explain why they have allowed this and whether they have weighed the environmental impact of the commercial activity.

Maybe the economic advantages of the activity outweigh the impact on the critters' home. Personally, I don't think so, nor, I suspect, would the critters.

We should be mindful that the land belongs to us no more than it does to the critters. The logs and pipes should be removed from the meadow and wetland. The log and truck operations should be kept on the areas already paved without further paving to the west being allowed.

The meadow and the wetland are or were a treasure.

PAUL HAIST
Astoria

Pushback

The recent Astoria Planning Commission's town hall meeting left me with significant concerns.

What characteristics of Astoria matter the most? There's the stimulating mix of cultures: fishers and loggers work with skill and cleverness, physical courage and brawn. Artists and intellectuals work with skill and cleverness, social and cultural courage and sensitivity. There's a vital downtown business community. Visitors love this, and their spending helps us thrive.

Every day we're immersed in awesome beauty of the river and sky, and in dramatic and melancholy weather. Best of all, views of this are available from affordable homes as well as from the Riverwalk.

The planning process proposes standards for major construction on the Columbia between Second Street and the bridge. Such buildings would destroy many views from homes and from the Riverwalk. The views from homes matter immensely: they're why many of us are here. David Carter asked about views of ships. It was then admitted that views from homes were not considered, and his query about ships was never even acknowledged. There's a problem here. Please protect all of the views.

It was explained that the proposed restrictions for new buildings north of the Riverwalk are for smaller and lower structures than now allowed. That's great. But why allow any? No motivation was given in the presentation, but in discussion afterward, I heard reference to a state requirement that 125 acres be available for development for water-dependent uses. We have such uses already. In fact, NOAA recently reported that the Astoria area topped the West Coast in pounds of fish landed. We're doing enough. It's time for major pushback against requirements to do more.

Reassurances were heard that there won't be any development anyway, because building over water is too expensive. I hope that's true, but it sounds like a sucker deal to rely on that.

For another issue, contrary to a proposed standard of concealing machinery along the Riverwalk, one of the great things about a working waterfront is seeing interesting operations and equipment. I watch fish in the chutes between 11th and 12th streets. I love seeing machinery. The brew pubs all have windows and glass doors so we can see. Are they making a mistake, or are they on to something?

DAVID LEE MYERS
Astoria

Obama is MIA

A flood of criticism has been directed at the affirmative action president

over the fact that he failed to attend the massive anti-terrorism demonstration held in Paris recently. That's when the leaders of some 40 nations joined the unprecedented display of solidarity against the horrific mass murders there by Muslim extremists aka terrorists. There was wide-ranging and myriad number of reasons and/or excuses as to why the community organizer turned up MIA (Missing In Action) from that stunning show of civilized-world solidarity. Based on a reading of several public pronouncements he has made in the past and actions he has taken, I would venture that the empty suit in the Oval Office either is a closet Muslim himself or, at least, a strong sympathizer of the "Religion of Peace." That's the opinion of one American citizen — me — given freely in a nation that still protects the right of freedom of speech.

E. ROBERT NASSIKAS
Astoria

Doomsday letter

The "Polluters should pay" letter in the Jan. 16 *Daily Astorian* is about as biased, untrue and hyperbolic a doomsday article as

any I have ever read.

According to the writer, in 10 years the oceans are going to be destroyed by acid. The rising oceans will flood most of the world's coastlines. War, pestilence, economic disaster, starvation, homelessness and more will be everywhere. Society as we know it will be gone, forever.

But, the writers miraculously have a solution. They say lil' ol' Oregon will save the world.

How? Gas is too cheap. They want polluters (i.e. gas companies) to pay to pollute. They don't have to stop polluting, just pay a fine. Then, we will have carbon fees, carbon mitigation fees, higher taxes and on and on and on.

Al Sharpton-style shake-downs of so-called polluters by extorting money from them for things that are never going to happen on that scale is coming soon. A company like Oregon Climate has got to get funds from somewhere. Why not just try to scare everybody to death?

The only solution that I see that will work in all honesty for such a prediction is to ban all internal combustion autos from our highways. Ban lawn mowers, weed eaters, barbecues, outdoor fires, generators, trimmers, heavy equipment, fertilizer and so on. Dire predictions require dire consequences. The problem of underpriced fossil fuels is a joke.

Please, Oregon Climate go away!

I worry more about our sun going super nova in a few million years. Now that's societal disruption.

STEVE SIMMONS
Astoria

Sense of place

I am a born-and-raised Astorian, 32 years old, living there as recently as August. I just moved to

Wyoming to attend graduate school for the next two years, studying historic preservation and sense of place. I would like to move back to an Astoria that values historic buildings, fosters sustainable development, provides low-income housing and encourages community trust. These ideals were loosely in place as I came of age in the 1990s. After the recent demolition of the historic Darigold building at Ninth and Duane streets, to make way for an expanded parking lot hole, I have begun to lose trust in Astoria's leaders.

Now they want to demolish the historic Merwyn Hotel (aka Waldorf Hotel) in order to expand the public library. The proposed demolition of this historic, soundly built structure runs counter to every popular movement in Main Street USA. Demolishing historic buildings erases a collective memory — erases it for all eternity. Adaptive reuse is smarter and greener, but takes more thought, more dreaming. Buoy Beer Company is one recent example of Astorians daring to dream.

Right now, the city leaders seem to value turning Astoria into some overpriced community for retirees. I've witnessed these same values turn Ashland, into a country club for the rich. This does not bode well for the future of Astoria. Young professionals will lose their sense of place in the city and look elsewhere for progressive small towns that value cultural heritage and social diversity over real-estate profits. Yes, the Merwyn sits empty. As does the haunted Flavel house on 15th and Franklin. What these vacant properties give Astorians is an imagination to dream. To ponder the "what ifs. ..." A demolished building is nothing to dream about.

CHUCK ADAMS
Laramie, Wyo.

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STAY RICH. TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY AND MIND.

Join us!

FREE! Fun for the whole family!
Community Health Fair

February 14, 9am-2pm
Clatsop County Fairgrounds
92937 Walluski Loop, Astoria, OR

Join the CMH/OHSU Cardiology Clinic on Valentine's Day for a fun and informative, heart-friendly Community Health Fair.

- ♥ Get basic health screenings.
- ♥ Get advice from experts on heart health, medication interactions, orthopedic surgery and more.
- ♥ Learn about local health & fitness programs.
- ♥ Talk with local medical specialists.
- ♥ Test your strength and balance.
- ♥ Win prizes hourly! Fun for the whole family!!

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PUBLIC NOTICE

CMH ENT/Cosmetic Surgery Clinic to close Feb. 20, 2015

After two years of dedicated service, Dr. Christopher Nyte will be leaving Astoria and the CMH ENT/Cosmetic Surgery Clinic will be closing.

Dr. Nyte will continue to keep scheduled appointments until Feb. 20, 2015, and will ensure that his patients have alternative options if they have been under his care. Any patients who have seen Dr. Nyte in the CMH ENT/Cosmetic Surgery Clinic in the past 2 years will be able to access their records through the CMH Medical Records department; the phone number is 503-338-7528.

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