

## Long two years

Did you watch the President of the U.S. (POTUS) State of Union address? He seems to have a really high opinion of himself, and is living in some fantasy world when it comes to the economy and employment numbers.

He takes credit for the lower prices on gas when he's done everything in his power to drive the costs up.

He wants all kinds of new taxes on the "rich" and more government freebies for all, including free medical leave, day care and free community college, but he doesn't say how he'll pay for it.

He talked about infrastructure, but forgets when he was elected president in 2008 that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was passed that cost the taxpayers \$830 billion — which was supposed to address some of it, then.

Where did that massive cash cow go, instead? To every government program and agency imaginable, and we still don't have any better roads and bridges. As if road and bridges would turn the whole economy around, anyway.

He claims foreign policy victories worldwide, when it's the worst situation we've been in seen since before the start of World War II.

He claims to have made the world a better place with his environmental policies, when all it's done is cost taxpayers billions. He sees the dollar signs for all of his green energy cronies, and lectures us about doomsday global warming, when it's a myth that has been debunked over and over again.

He calls for bipartisan cooperation and then threatens four different times he'd veto legislation that addresses Obamacare, amnesty and his other bad policies.

But the most memorial line from his long-winded deception of an ego trip was when he taunts the Republicans with this statement: "I have no more campaigns to run. (A few Republicans applaud in the audience.) I know, because I won both of them."

That statement in summary explains Obama, and what he thinks about himself or any bipartisan cooperation. He isn't going to consent to any change in his failed policies. It's going to be a long two years.

JEFF JACQUES  
Astoria

## POW/MIA tributes

In 1971, I met a former U.S. Army sergeant major, a member of the Army Special Forces. His name was Norman (Norm) Doney. He was very involved in trying to bring home Prisoners of War (POWs) and having many of those Killed in Action (KIA) returned to their loved ones. He was spending many hours, and much of his own funds in this work. He is highly regarded by veterans in Clatsop County for his honest and compassionate assistance to those veterans in need.

# Port of Astoria's potential

As a concerned citizen and commercial fisherman, I have watched the Port of Astoria's long painful slide into disrepair through micromanagement and lack of vision for diversity on the part of the port commissioners. I've seen other ports up and down the coast flourish, while ours, which should be the showboat of the West Coast, slowly turn to ruin, both financially and physically.

The Central Waterfront Master plan which was adopted in June 2001, still in place in 2010, has been totally disregarded. Obviously something needs to change. When invited to sit in on the meetings of the Committee to Rebuild, Revitalize and Restore the Port of Astoria (CR3PA), changing the way the port commissioners were selected, I accepted.

It was the mayors of the cities of South County who started formulating the petition. They felt though their cities contributed a large amount of the Port's tax base, they were not being represented. The CR3PA initiative is not intended to take away the vote of the people, but merely to change the way the commissioners are selected. From a popularity vote (who has the most signs wins), to selecting people with skills in management and understanding of representing the interests of all of Clatsop County.

There is a tremendous amount of talent in Clat-

sop County, but there has to be a benign and collegiate workplace to attract them. The voters select their city and county commissioners, and may also recommend to any sitting council or commission member anyone they feel is qualified to stand for port commissioner.

It would be the job of the city and county commissioners to then vet the nominees for qualifications; nominees must be Clatsop County residents. The names are then sent to the governor's office for final selection, which would be the governor's only involvement. Although there is a recall petition being proposed, it is not from this group. No port commissioner now sitting is threatened; this is merely a way to select more qualified, professional commissioners in the future.

I was put off by any involvement by the governor, as Oregon voters have been slapped in the face by him too many times, but as I studied the proposal I realized we will still have full control through our city and county commissioners.

If they have the clear-sightedness to ask the right questions, all prospects will simply have the well-being of our port and the development of all its facets as their sole agenda. The potential of our port is huge, the dereliction, mind boggling.

DAVE DENSMORE  
Astoria

He passed away in February 2013, and is buried at the Fort Stevens Military Cemetery. My reason for mentioning him is two-fold. I want him and his work not forgotten. They both need to be honored. His work was not just local. It was nationwide. His belief in the POW/Missing in Action (MIA) program was very strong. His monthly newsletter went out to many around the world.

In working with him, and learning the method he used in paying physical tribute to the POWs/MIAs to honor all military service units at one time, including the Merchant Marine, I set up a program that will always be available to any group or organization that wishes to display and honor their memory. The program includes the lighting of the candles and the salute by each of the military services.

Under ORS 187.220,2013, the law reads: A public body shall display the National League of Families POW/MIA flag with the United States flag upon or near the principal building of the public body on the following days: (a) Armed Forces Day on the third Saturday in May, (b) Memorial Day on the last Monday in May, (c) Flag Day June 14, (d) Independence Day July 4, (e) National POW/MIA Recognition Day, (f) Veterans Day on November 11.

Gov. Kitzhaber proclaimed Sept. 19 to be POW/MIA Recognition Day in Oregon. Lest we forget. These figures may have come down a bit, but summary statistics of unaccounted for from past conflicts stand at: World War II 73,515; Korean War 7,860; Cold War 126; Vietnam War 1,636; and

Iraq and other conflicts 6; bringing the total to over 83,000.

There are many other people and many organizations and fraternal groups that display the POW/MIA tribute at special events. If you have an opportunity to attend this special honor, please do so. It is something you will not forget. It was men like Norm Doney who helped increase the knowledge and awareness of our unaccounted for. As long as I can, I will help display and pay tribute to those not back home. I am available most anytime and have all the materials required to display.

MEL JASMIN  
Warrenton

## Safety first

There is a recent proposal from Brim Aviation via Kyle Fortune to allow Brim Aviation/Air Rescue Systems (ARS) to become the Fixed Base Operator (FBO) at the Port of Astoria. Yet all safety and historic information about this outfit has not been clearly outlined. Safety should come first, not promoting existing businesses with multiple issues, including two separate fatalities on the business watch of Burl Brim Jr. Jon Suhr was dropped to his death by Brim Aviation/ARS two years ago, in Childress, Texas. Brim Excavation also had a fatality, when the back-up sounding horn did not work properly. Burl Brim was fined for that.

On Dec. 3, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) proposed a \$220,000 fine against Brim Aviation/ARS for being reckless and breaching safety requirements (<http://tinyurl.com/brimavia1>).

There is also a current lawsuit against Brim/ARS in California for an incident at the Siskiyou County Airport, wherein crops were allegedly destroyed (Rex Houghton v. Brim Aviation). Craig Morrison, Brim's pilot, had his license suspended for "endangering the lives of others" as ruled by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB Order No. EA-5619) regarding flying and filming on the Rogue River.

The list goes on. Working in a dangerous field of business is one thing, negligence and scofflaw behavior are another.

Fortune claims the MD Helicopters Inc. (MDHI) helicopter is temporarily parked at the airport. How do we know that they are not being used for training and personal financial gain?

The laws are for everyone, equally. The valid and factual list of concerns goes on. Hiring "staff" is not the answer, nor disqualifying the competitive bid process, or rushing the procedure for FBO.

Safety should come first. The Port has a lot of concerns and questions facing it just now. It would be prudent to listen and proceed cautiously.

LINDA LEWIS  
Ashland

## Library risk

While I don't have deeply polarized opinions about the expansion of the Astoria Library into the Merwyn space, I have a few questions that should come up at a planning commission meeting.

Apparently Astoria still issues building permits to private parties to build in earthquake and tsunami

risky locations, and I presume the city requires the private parties to hold the city harmless for their upcoming loss and possible death.

When it comes to expanding a public building within a risky location do the rules of liability change? Does one use the library at one's own risk? The existing library was completed in 1967 (48 years ago). Was it built on piling? Apparently it was not built on fill over estuary, so enhanced movement may not be an issue, but a tsunami is.

Since dense building materials are prone to greater damage than lighter building materials in an earthquake, shouldn't a geotechnical engineer estimate the susceptibility of both buildings to a 9.0 event? If the seismic risk is high, then perhaps a new building of safer construction at a less risky location would be a better investment?

My personal opinion is the Merwyn facade is more attractive than the existing library's exterior, which reminds me of a concrete block with a door, or a World War II pill box. My dad designed the Coos Bay library of 1965, and it has timeless beauty.

Is it likely that future office space will be needed for the city administration in the future? The existing library could become the convenient office annex. Just issue the employees hard hats and running shoes.

DAVID FITCH  
Astoria

## Lights missing

Recently my wife, our dog and I were almost hit in the crosswalk by Safeway. This is my third close call. I mean close — all three vehicles were within reach as they sped through a left-hand turn.

I was wearing my high visibility safety yellow jacket. I was wearing a 120-lumen headlight, pointed at the driver. Last month I witnessed a four-point buck get hit in the opposite crosswalk.

While all three of these incidents had their specifics, they all share one common aggravating factor noticed by my co-worker: The intersection is unlighted.

There are streetlights on all the blocks in every direction. The traffic poles are designed to be capped with streetlights, there are two very heavily used bus stops, and zero streetlights at this intersection.

The cynic in me wonders who bargained away the requirement for one of the busiest crosswalks of east Astoria, or, conversely what lack of planning oversight allowed this to occur? Now, having almost been killed for the third time in two years — all three times wearing high visibility clothing and a headlight.

The city is aware of the problem, and has this project slated for August, pending funding.

ROGER LINDSLEY  
Astoria



## Conserving the Natural Heritage of the Columbia River

February 12th Glen Lamb

### TO ATTEND:

**For Members:**  
Dinner & Lecture: \$30 ea.  
Lecture only: no charge

**For Non-Members:**  
Dinner & Lecture: \$40 ea.  
Lecture only: \$15 ea.

Appetizers will be available at 6 p.m.

Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

The speaker will begin after the dinner service is complete and non-dinner members and guests of the audience take their seats.

Forum to be held at the CMH Community Center at 2021 Exchange St., Astoria.

**LIMITED SEATING**  
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# ColumbiaForum

FOR RESERVATION OR TO JOIN COLUMBIA FORUM CONTACT:  
Holly Larkins at 503.325.3211 ext. 227 or [forum@dailyastorian.com](mailto:forum@dailyastorian.com) by Feb.9th, 2015

Columbia Forum is sponsored by:

The Daily Astorian • Craft3 • OSU Seafood Laboratory • KMUN-FM  
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**FREE Screening Event: Oregon Experience's Astoria**

Starting as a fur trade center, Astoria was the foot in the door for the U.S. to claim the Oregon Territory. Over time, the town grew into a thriving timber community, an international port and the salmon-canning capital of the world. Now, *Oregon Experience* explores this active corner of Oregon.

**TONIGHT, 7 p.m.** (doors open at 6:30 p.m.)  
Columbia River Maritime Museum, 1792 Marine Drive, Astoria

OREGON experience | OPB | THE OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY | COLUMBIA RIVER MARITIME MUSEUM

Photo courtesy of Clatsop County Historical Society