

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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Spurning Chinook Tribe is incomprehensible

Washington Senate's motivation was good, but omissions cry out

The Washington State Senate's 42-7 vote last week to require public schools to include the history of the state's 29 federally recognized Indian tribes in their curricula was a good step, but lawmakers missed a great chance to do right by one of our region's greatest tribes, the Chinook Indian Nation.

Leaving the Chinook out is comprehensible in simple political terms. There are at least 10 other Native American groups in the state that assert tribal status but have not been granted it via official federal channels. Some have a tenuous connection to reality, while others like the Chinook and Duwamish have strong arguments for continued existence. (There are at least 11 unrecognized tribes in Oregon, including the Clatsop-Nehalem Confederated Tribes.)

But spurning the Chinook is incomprehensible in terms of historical reality and justice.

Eminent archaeologists and ethnologists say the Chinook family of tribes along the tidal reaches of the Columbia River were one of the most powerful civilizations on the West Coast. Speak with someone like Ken Ames of Portland State University and his eyes light up with excitement at the thought of the richness and dominance of the Chinook in this prime territory. They controlled the Columbia River the way the ancient Greeks dominated the Aegean Sea.

The motivations behind the Washington Senate's Indian curriculum legislation are admirable. It received broad bipartisan support, based on the propositions that our region's first peoples deserve respect; that 19th

and 20th century settlers unleashed genocidal diseases and purposeful policies that took tens of thousands of lives; and that we still have much to learn from the first peoples' deep and successful connections to the lands and waters we now all share. In modern times, tribes are major players in fisheries conservation, land development and other important activities.

There is nothing in the legislation to preclude educators from choosing to include Chinook culture and history in lessons. Here in their hereditary homeland, teachers and students certainly should spend a few days during K-12 schooling to learn about this amazing tribe.

It is possible to imagine an integrated lesson plan that would encompass the Chinook Tribe's role in Pacific Rim economics and intertribal politics, traditional foods and medicines, music and language. We who live here in the 21st century would find our lives enriched by better understanding how the Chinook managed to do so well here for thousands of years.

State Sen. Brian Hatfield tried late in the process to amend the legislation to include the Chinook. Perhaps it can be managed in conference committee or in some future legislative session. It is well worth keeping up this latest fight on behalf of tribal justice.

Time to raise salaries for our judges, governor

In Gov. John Kitzhaber's recent decline and fall, Oregon voters were reminded that the governor of Oregon is paid \$98,000 annually. Even in a state that notoriously devalues the compensation for elective public service, what we pay our governor is laughable. Oregon pays the 45th lowest governor salary in America. Our companions in the bottom five are Colorado, Arkansas, Arizona and Maine.

The most generous states are Pennsylvania, Tennessee, New York, Illinois and New Jersey.

We are well behind our West Coast neighbors: Washington at \$166,891, the ninth most generous state, and California at \$173,987, the seventh.

These numbers are for 2014 and are gathered by the website Ballotpedia.

If you look at how Oregon pays its judges, there is a similar pattern. For salaries paid for general jurisdictional courts (circuit courts), Oregon ranks 49th. For salaries paid to the state's highest court, we rank 48th. Those numbers are gathered by the National Council for State Courts.

There is a little-known Oregon Public Officials Compensation Commission.

It makes recommendations for salary adjustments to the state Legislature. The commission in 2008 recommended raising the governor's salary from \$93,600 to \$130,000. The subsequent raise took the governor to the present \$98,000.

State government's size puts it on a par with Nike and Intel. But the American tradition is not to make that comparison.

Compensation became a discussion topic with Kitzhaber, because he sought outside speaking engagements and it appears that he and his girlfriend were trying to supplement their collective income by getting paid to do favors for outside interests.

Raising the governor's salary would not necessarily inhibit another Kitzhaber-type episode. The best antidote to that is a good example by his successor. And Gov. Kate Brown is showing that with the sweeping ethics and public records disclosure legislation, she proposed last week.

We urge legislators to find the gumption to take this one on. The same is true for judicial salaries, where there is a very real comparison to be made with what a good lawyer can make in private practice.

GUEST COLUMN

Port disappoints community on boatyard, access to city park

By CELIA TIPPIT
For The Daily Astorian

I was alarmed to read the March 15 article in The Daily Astorian that announced that the Port of Astoria plans to close our boatyard as soon as April 1.

I had hoped that under new leadership the commissioners just might be able to readjust their views of the Port's wayward directions and actually respect the major part that individual boat owners play in our community.

The Port shows no awareness of the role that the boating community has played in the past and not a whit of common sense about the present state of affairs. The city of Astoria has embraced boats and boating for eons: The Regatta was first celebrated 120 years ago; the annual FisherPoets Gathering focuses on fishermen and women and their boats; the Great Columbia Crossing celebrates the Columbia River and its vital role in our community. Boats are an integral part of all our lives, but boats need to be maintained, repaired and cared for in a local boatyard.

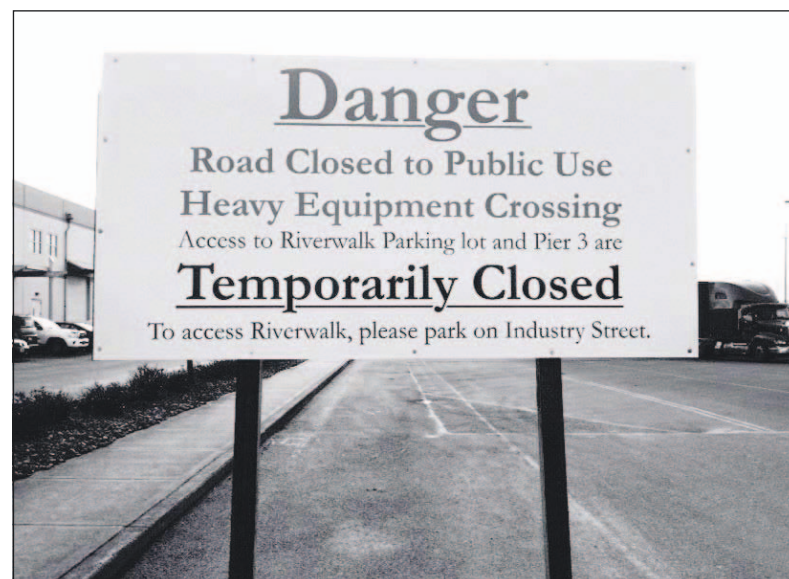
According to Mike Weston, Port of Astoria director of business development, the boatyard is profitable by \$75,000 to \$100,000. Why is this profit not going directly to the boatyard so that cleanup can commence while the Port works with, not against, the Department of Environmental Quality? Why send our boats to Ilwaco when the Port was directly instrumental in getting Englund Marine to move their highly regarded establishment to the Pier 3 arena so they could readily service the boatyard and the West End Mooring Basin?

Why can't the Port establish and enforce guidelines for all who drydock their vessels so that individuals can be held responsible for their failures? Why is the Port Executive Director Jim Knight so willing to "enter into a plan" with the DEQ?

Why after only four-plus months on the job is Knight so ready to capitulate? Why the unrealistic rush?

If anyone has been paying attention to China and their own predicted decrease in building, one should realize that this "boom" of log exporting may not go on much longer.

I am amazed by the apparent ignorance of the Port commissioners on the workings of a boatyard. Any boat that is in a boatyard is — by location — incapable of being moved easily. Boats in a



Celia Tippit photo

This sign at the Port's Pier 3 warns people of the parking lot closure.



Celia Tippit photo

Log loaders and other equipment are busy behind the parking lot to the city park at the Port of Astoria's Pier 3.

boatyard are not seaworthy; that is why they are there.

City park: Another probable closure

This second probable closing affects every citizen in Astoria. The city park at Pier 3 is located at the west end of the pier and is located on the edge of our notable Riverwalk; it is, in fact, the end of the Riverwalk. (Remember when the Port came forward five or six years ago with an offer to develop a park at the northwest point of Pier 3? I do.)

There are 10 parking places, including one for disabled parking at the site. There is a "mutt mitt" station. There are lights that line the length of the path on the westward side. There is a paved path and benches at the end of the path.

This city park has been regularly used by a cross-section of Astorians — small children on bicycles, the elderly and the healing with their walkers, grown children pushing their parents and grandparents in wheelchairs, tourists on foot or on hotel-provided bicycles, Astoria High School track runners, lovers and friends watching sunsets, and lots of dog walkers. Here, there is quiet and friendliness. (I have walked

my Lulu for more than six years at this spot and I also availed myself of the disabled parking when I was recovering from a hip replacement. It was a boon to have that paved path readily accessible.)

Now, just outside Englund Marine's establishment on Gateway Street (how ironic!), there is a stern sign telling us that our street is "temporarily" closed due to log truck activity. The sign advises the would-be visitor to park on Industry Street and walk the long way to the city park. This involves an additional walk of about a quarter mile. Why cannot Astoria's Forest Products hire a flag person to direct traffic down this city street and keep our street and our park accessible to all of us? They can easily pay for such an action.

At this time "temporary" is not defined; no hours or days or weeks or months are spelled out. I fear the next sign will use the word "indefinitely." Will "permanently" follow? City park at Pier 3 is adjacent to the city's own Riverwalk located at the end of a city street. Will this area now be denied to the citizens of Astoria?

In her past life, Celia Tippit was a boat builder. She built and sailed a 50-foot trimaran on a round trip from San Francisco to Maui. She knows and likes boatyards, marinas and boat people. For several years she was in charge of the Astoria Music Festival's Hosts Program. She is a rusty bridge player, and has a high regard for the Pacific Ocean.

Open forum

Our little Mayberry

Gearhart, or what some out-of-town homeowners call "our little Mayberry." We love our Gearhart community. Our quaint little town and the locally owned family businesses have sustained Gearhart for over a century. Their contributions to our economic growth are what keeps our town alive.

They are the heartbeat of the community, and Gearhart's city government needs to support these businesses. Gearhart's city government needs to ask, "What can we do for you?" and, "How can we support you?" Members of our Gearhart city government should not involve themselves in gossip and innuendos designed to intimidate or control business owners and/or residents.

We love our weekend coffee and pastries from the local bakery, lunch or dinner with friends and family. The convenience of shopping for gifts, groceries, home decor, and flowers for our garden, ice cream with the grandkids, and haircuts from the local barber, all of which create lasting memories that are important to a healthy community. Keeping Gearhart special is our goal.

Unnecessary, poorly written ordinances undermine the livability of what we all hold dear. We now have a burn ordinance and a fence ordinance, all of which require a permit — but we do not have to pay for said

permit. What, exactly, are these ordinances designed to do?

A noise ordinance, complete with the local police using a decibel meter to measure a backyard barbecue party, your children's laughter, or your dog's bark. The silencing of Gearhart's residents is an act of bureaucratic vandalism that deeply upsets and offends the vast majority of the Gearhart population.

In 20 years of local government involvement, Dianne Widdop has learned very little about the community she lives in. What we have so far from Dianne Widdop's reign as mayor is to button up the community to fit her agenda. When public servants are acting anti-democratically, a big stink needs to be made.

Make a big stink. Vote yes to recall Mayor Dianne Widdop.

JAE YOUNG
Gearhart

Thrilled at the news

We in Parents' Rights in Education have been working to safeguard children from much of what the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) have been perpetrating on minors for the past several years — without parental knowledge or permission.

We are thrilled at the news that the annual Adolescent Sexuality Conference in Seaside has been canceled. Actually, kids all over the state are the biggest winners.

We will continue to keep a close eye on the ODE and OHA, as we know their stealth agenda is still active within their "Comprehensive Sexuality Education," and within their OHA School-Based Health Centers.

You can view video and hear audio revealing empirical evidence which was used to expose what the ODE and OHA had presented and provided for youth at the annual Adolescent Sexuality Conference at www.parentsrightsined.net. On Facebook, look for "Parents' Rights in Education."

CHRIS BRIDGENS
Warrenton

Bigger not always better

I read, with a sinking heart the article "How big can you be, Astoria?" (*The Daily Astorian*, March 6). Can one businessman have this much influence on our small town?

Astoria's charm lies in its small town warmth. I didn't move here wanting to live in a "major tourist destination" or to be next to an "international airport." I don't want to live next to a Pacific Northwest "Fisherman's Wharf."

Huy Ying Chen's vision isn't my vision, and it would ruin all that makes me love this town. I can't help but think I'm not alone. Bigger is not always better.

TERRIE POWERS
Astoria