

## Nasty drone policy

When Hamas sends a rocket into an Israeli city, it's labeled terrorism and "deplored" by all. When President Obama orders team CIA to take out a target, it's also terrorism. Historically, there has never been a drone strike where innocents were not killed. Maybe the administration feels that their lives are of little importance since they live in the Third World.

At least in the days of James Bond a "license to kill" was required, but nowadays a drone operator in Langley, Va., doesn't even need a driver's license to kill dozens of individuals. Obama's drone policy disgusts me.

LARRY BRANDT  
Cathlamet, Wash.

## None of the above

David Densmore's column, "Put the pride back in the Port" (*The Daily Astorian*, April 14), added to over a decade of criticism of mismanagement at the Port of Astoria, expressed in numerous editorials, copious letters to the editor, and uncountable words of protest from our county's residents. Densmore concluded with a suggestion, "Maybe it's time to vote 'None of the Above' for the Port commissioners." I agree, except for his word "maybe."

The current batch of Port commissioners oversaw the most recent Port fiascos: 1) suddenly announcing they would close the boatyard; and 2) duping the county and (unsuccessfully) trying to pressure Astoria into co-sponsoring the Port's enterprise zone, which offered no ability to incentivize business expansion that we don't already (equivalently) have, but could have forced us to squander future tax waivers on businesses which we would not have otherwise chosen to subsidize.

Yet the three incumbent Port commissioners who are running for reelection now are unopposed. That is not surprising, though. It is daunting to run against moneyed interests who benefit from continuing the current administration, and it is dismaying that so many voters unquestioningly vote for incumbents. But that leaves us now with three unopposed Port Commissioner incumbents who are stubbornly serving their personal ideologies instead of serving the public's best interests. Given that, what is the best we can do in this current election?

When diligent voters realize they are faced with unacceptable but unopposed candidates like these, they often do not mark a vote in those races at all. Unfortunately, that would be indistinguishable from apathy, and would thereby only further discourage potential good candidates in the future.

However, darkening the write-in box and writing next to it "none of the above" would demonstrate there are voters who know and care about what's going on at the Port, and who would have been pleased to vote for candidates willing to carry out the duties of a public servant. The total number of write-in votes in each race is reported by the county clerk's office as part of the standard election returns.

Please write in "none of the above" for the three Port of Astoria commissioner races, and urge others to do the same. It's the best option available to us right now.

SHEL CANTOR  
Astoria

## Sea lion dock

Some have proposed building a dock especially for the sea lions as a way to mitigate the costs incurred by the Port of As-

# Remembering Nora Eldora Burkett

My cousin Janice Reid and I would like to thank Matt Love for featuring our grandmother's inscription in his article "The Maritime (Poetry) Memorial" (*Coast Weekend*, April 16). We do indeed find it, as we found her, poetic and unique.

To complete the story about Nora Eldora Burkett (1915-1998), we recall her many nights coming home from

her work at the cannery in Astoria. She would drop her clothes at the door and head for the tub and perhaps a whiskey. She was a member of the volunteer fire department. She enjoyed Don Ho, clamming, and talking on her party line.

The inscription came from her retort when the phone would ring early in the morning calling her in to work. She would fillet almost anything — includ-

ing a large, 6-foot long eel. However, although she was highly skilled (we have this on video) she disliked shucking crab. Thus, "don't call me for crab" was a fitting line in the space provided.

Thank you for visiting her and for remembering her and others during National Poetry Month.

TRACY KLEIN  
Ocean Park, Wash.

toria due to their presence; yet, then who pays for this dock?

I think there might be an economic incentive to build such a dock. I think tourists, and others, would like to get closer to the sea lions, and would be willing to pay to do so. Could a dock be built, with a secure barrier on it, for people to stand behind, so tourists can get within a couple of feet of these great creatures, and pay for the privilege to do so?

Could such a dock generate enough revenue to justify its creation?

M. ALEXANDER  
"SASHA" MILLER  
Astoria

## Secular government

Growing up, as a young girl, we said the Pledge of Allegiance every morning before class. It went like this: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

When the Constitution was written, there was a division of church and state. Judging by what is going on around the world, I think that was very wise.

I want governance without someone telling me what I need to believe in, or being beheaded for not having the same belief.

CORDIE RIDDLE  
Astoria

## Time for change

Sea lions, elk, cormorants, owls, wolves, coyotes, cats — the list goes on — all victims of scapegoating so that we may avoid having to suffer the inconvenience of change. We have ravaged the land and water, destroying habitat and one species after another. When we have nearly destroyed one, we lash out at any others daring to try to "share" the rest.

People talk about these animals as though they are deliberately and maliciously interfering with us, our jobs, and our property. How does one even begin to back that up? We breed animals to destroy them, and then ask for the "right" to kill others that interfere with our killing. For what? Money? A perceived sense of entitlement? Where does it end? When we are the lone species on the planet, we will quickly see that we cannot survive.

The common denominator in all animal vs. human conflicts is, well, humans. We deny other species the right to exist in their natural environment, and condemn them for encroaching into what we see as our spaces. We fail to see that we are the ones creating the conflict, with our inability to share and our lack of forethought and tolerance. It is way past time we started exploring the many options available. The animals have none, so we should think carefully each time we build, recreate, or engage in a livelihood dependent on natural resources.

A special note to those responsible for the recent spate of sea lion killings, and for those whose venomous words condone such acts: I am sorry for you. Because you succumb to fear, and to your basest and most vile human instincts, rather than exercise the higher qualities of creativity and

compassion you were born with.

To blindly cling to outdated ways of life and thinking will doom us all, and one day we will be the ones being culled.

RITA SMITH  
Hammond

## Pick Rickenbach

I first met Jenna Rickenbach in 2005, when we both volunteered to be involved with the Tapiola Playground Project. She was a member of the planning team, and was also the chairwoman of the childcare committee. She organized other volunteers and planned quality activities for the children of our building volunteers. She ran the equivalent of a childcare center, serving as many as 60 kids a day during build week. She was an integral part of making that playground a reality for our kids.

A year later she invited me to join the board of directors for the Astoria Children's Museum. During most of the years I served on the board, she was our president. She was always looking for ways to improve the museum, and eventually led us through a strategic planning process, a merger with the Indoor Play Park and a move to Gray School to create the Port of Play. I now get to work alongside

her as a parent, volunteer and sometimes judge for the Tsunami Skipper's Jump Rope Team.

These are just a few of the many ways she is involved in contributing to the lives of children and families in our community, but this is how I've come to know her well. She is not afraid to dig in and do the work nobody else wants, and she is gifted at bringing diverse groups of people together to get things done.

She dreams big, is calm through adversity and has the ability to stay focused on goals. In my perspective, a recent *Daily Astorian* article painted a picture of her as someone with a partisan agenda ("Health center project sways Astoria School Board race," May 1). She and I do not always agree, in fact we did not agree on the health care issue in 2013.

Still, I know her to be a real advocate for children and their parents. I know I can count on her to work hard, do her research and make thoughtful, educated decisions. Please join me and vote for Jenna Rickenbach for Astoria School Board.

MOLLY ALBRIGHT  
Astoria

## Kochs attack union

I read with great interest the letter detailing the

Koch Brothers ownership connection to the Georgia Pacific Wauna Paper Mill. Being the largest single employer in Clatsop County, this relationship is critical. I think most people were aware of this connection, and the fact that the Koch Brothers are the largest single wing contributors to a right wing ideology, that in my opinion, is hugely detrimental to the working middle class.

What I think most people don't realize is the crucial role that the union has played in keeping Wauna an employer with real family wage jobs. This maintains a motivated, happy workforce that consequently keeps the Wauna Mill as one of the most productive paper mills in the world. I have many contemporaries who are now retired, enjoying a justly earned pension, after having given their entire working career to the Wauna Mill.

Nonetheless, since being acquired by the Koch Brothers, all aspects of the collective bargaining agreement have been under attack, and significant erosion has occurred. The Kochs would undoubtedly like to see Wauna mirror the paper mills all across the South that pay barely above minimum wage, with little or no benefits. The greed is palpable. Collectivity is the only factor that gives the puny

David, the Clatsop County workforce, a chance against the Goliath billions of the Kochs.

CHRIS CONNAWAY  
Astoria

## Celebrate animals

In response to "For 100 years, celebrities have helped urge animal kindness" (*The Daily Astorian*, April 29): In early May the nation will mark the 100th anniversary of the most successful and longest-running commemorative week in U.S. history, "Be Kind to Animals Week" which is May 4-10. This special week has taught generations of American children the enduring value of treating animals with love, care and compassion.

We've come a long way over the past 100 years, but there's more to be done to change the world for billions of wild, companion, and farm animals still in need. This is why the American Humane Association is launching an ambitious year-long campaign called "Kindness 100" ([www.Kindness100.org](http://www.Kindness100.org)) to teach children the value of caring, and set the stage to create a more humane world for animals over the next 100 years.

The need has never been greater, and the time has never been better to start a new Compassion Movement. To help all of the creatures of the world, big and small, we encourage every American to celebrate "Be Kind to Animals Week" not only for a week, but all year round. By teaching our children the value of kindness, we may together build a better world for our animals and ourselves.

ROBIN GANZERT  
President and CEO,  
American Humane  
Association

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Clatsop County Chapter-Oregon Hunters Association

# "THANKS YOU"

Proceeds from our Annual Fund Raising Banquets are used locally to support the organization's mission:

"To Provide: Abundant/Huntable Wildlife Resources in Oregon for Present and Future Generations, Enhancement of Wildlife Habitat, and Protection of Hunter's Rights."

(\*\*\*MONEY RAISED HERE, STAYS HERE!\*\*\*)

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