

Big goobers

Well, once again we have shown the world just what big goobers we are here in Clatsop County. We expect thousands of people in town for the Goonies event, and we dress our Astoria Column so it looks like a giant penis with a condom, especially at night.

Then, in spite of years of talk about becoming a tourist destination, we have gone to great lengths to scare off the only thing attracting any tourists, sea lions. "Dorca" the orca was a nice touch. It looked so good floating belly up on the national news.

The sea lions must be laughing themselves silly at the attempts to get rid of them. I know the rest of us are. Keep up the good work.

DAVE BERGQUIST
Gearhart

Colorful flags

If the person suggesting beach balls for sea lion deterrence was a female, then it's easy to understand the local reluctance to try this method. Pure sexism.

I think there will also be reluctance to try tall flags as a method of cormorant deterrence. Think scarecrows, flag-style. Birds hate them. I mean those car lot colorful flags along sidewalks everywhere. These are cheap. No more than two would be required for a test.

J. E. BOLES
Portland

Wyden for president

At this point in time, Hillary Clinton seems to be the only nominee acceptable to the Democratic Party. The only other announced nominee is from New Hampshire — who is registered as Independent, but now is running as a Democrat. He is 73 years old. That alone makes him an undesirable presidential candidate.

I believe that Hillary Clinton would be better served if she had a viable opponent at the Democrat Party Convention, which is now almost a year away. I personally have been a supporter of President Obama's policies, and I believe that he has done the most of any recent president to provide for our nation's peace, prosperity and to promote world peace.

He has had a difficult time because he has been a minority president, with a Republican-dominated House of Representatives (and now even the Senate) who have disagreed with him at every turn and have tried to block many of the successful policies he has promoted — such as the antinuclear proposed agreement with Iran, the closing of Guantanamo, and a variety of economic and financial measures to ensure economic stability.

The person whom I think is most flexible politically — although he, too, switched parties on some votes — is U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, who is a lot like President Obama because his parents were refugees who came to this country seeking freedom. Wyden's family came from Europe. His father was a refugee from the Holocaust in Nazi Germany.

Ron Wyden was born in the U.S., and so is constitutionally eligible to become president.

JACK L. GRAVES
Garibaldi

Made in America

Although I applaud the president's recent call for moderation in the cost of college for our young people, I feel that the administration is overlooking an even greater urgency, and that is jobs for the working class.

Ever since the Reagan years, the specter of foreign competition for jobs in manufacturing has hung like a shroud over working Americans, and stifled and thwarted any effort to relieve their anxiety. Presently, foreign-made goods are available in our stores in direct competition with goods made by American workers in American factories. Since there are little or no restrictions on their import and sale, they are in direct and unfair competition with products made here and by American workers.

If the Asian workers were being paid at a corresponding wage rate, it would be a fair competition, but they are not. Many of these goods and products are manufactured under

Cruise Host volunteer is proud of Astoria

I worked as a volunteer Cruise Host May 14 while a ship visited Astoria. I am so proud of our community. I had the privilege of helping an 87-year-old Australian woman take care of a couple of concerns. She needed a replacement part for her hearing aid, and had also broken a tooth during her current 30 days cruising since leaving Hong Kong. She accompanied me in my car, and off we went.

The hearing center had the necessary replacement part for her hearing aid, and did not charge her a cent for their assistance. Next, I took her to my dentist, and he was able to address her concerns; and again there was no cost to her. Both businesses treated her with the utmost care and concern and enjoyed visiting with her, and she shared where she was from and how im-

pressed she was with Astoria.

A veteran world traveler, she shared with me the friendly, capable assistance that she received in Astoria would be the talk at her dining table that night, and was an experience she'll never forget. I am so fortunate to live here and call this remarkable community my home.

CINDY HANSEN
Warrenton

questionable working conditions, by workers who are all but slaves, or at best indentured.

To think that this can be happening, and that we aren't outraged by it, is stunning. The American worker was the envy of the world just a few years back, and now finds himself making poor wages, often working two jobs just to make a meager income. We must change this.

The answer is to do what has been done for centuries past. We must tax and encumber these cheaply made goods and encourage the purchase of products "Made in America." We must impose tariffs and embargoes on products that are produced by poorly paid workers, and/or under conditions that would violate our own labor laws. Not only will it help American workers, but it might stimulate better wages and conditions for foreign wage earners. Both are desirable outcomes

JACK GUYOT
Astoria

Stop the can

The state of Oregon has been playing a long-running game of Kick the Can in regard to the liquefied natural gas terminal and pipeline proposed for Warrenton. Our new governor, Kate Brown, claims she will "insist that every regulatory board and agency do its job fully and correctly" (*The Oregonian*, May 31)

The can that continually gets kicked is the Consistency Certification. Oregon LNG requested such a letter from Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development in July 2013. Seven times this state agency has ducked the question, and repeatedly kicked the can down the road.

Seems like this letter is just one more item on the check list, but it turns out the Consistency Certification is the key to the kingdom. When Oregon notifies the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that the application does not comply with local and state law, then according to the Coastal Zone Management Act, the application cannot move forward on the federal level.

In October 2013, Clatsop County commissioners voted 5-0 that the 42-mile pipeline, bisecting Clatsop County, does not meet local land use codes. Will Gov. Brown uphold Oregon land use law, which requires consistency with local land use regulations?

The path to denial is clear. On April 29, the Land Use Board of Appeals upheld the Clatsop County decision. Our state agencies have the tools they need to end this 10-year nightmare. They simply await decisive leadership on the issue of exporting fossil on the Columbia River.

Right now, Gov. Brown holds this key in her hands. Will she back our locally elected officials and the people of Clatsop County who have clearly, consistently said no to Oregon LNG?

The action is simple. We call upon Gov. Brown to deny the Consistency Certification and inform FERC that the Oregon LNG proposal does not meet the land use laws of our state.

Gov. Brown can do better than Kick the Can. We urge our governor to stand up for the people and laws of Oregon.

CHERYL JOHNSON
Astoria

Child adrift

Sometimes, this world turns around an axis my heart cannot fathom. For years, I've listened to, and agreed with, those who accuse conservatives (in general) of being devoted to the unborn, but not the born, with those with the potential to be, but not those who already

are. But recently, I've been reminded of both liberals and conservatives can fail kids, who should know the love and protection of their arms.

Through friends (foster parents) I've come to know several of the foster children in our community, an unhappy circumstance a great number of people are trying to change, despite a constant replenishing tide of challenges and children.

There is one boy's fate that particularly grieves me, at present. He's 6. I've been told he was moved to this county because no one wanted to adopt him where he's from. Now, it seems he's likely to be moved to another county, for the same reason. Of course, the older he gets, the less likely someone will claim him as their own.

Here's a boy that two counties of liberal and conservative adults have said no to being his mom and dad, to offering him that most essential element in human happiness — family. Here, "family values," and "liberal values" seem empty words, used more to blame others than achieve any real good.

It will be a very sad Father's Day for one boy, and that is a sad reflection upon our community, both liberal and conservative. Don't brag about Astoria to me for a while, I don't want to hear it.

Happy Father's Day. Or not.
M. ALEXANDER "SASHA" MILLER
Astoria

Transparency

Our approval rating for our government officials is an abysmal 7 percent. Since

the beginning of the 1970s, income inequality has skyrocketed; union membership has collapsed, while executive pay has become obscene. President Eisenhower's democratic promise of a free college education has been quashed. College is now out of the reach of our middle class. While the military corporate complex grinds on to perpetual war, our privacy has disappeared down a black hole.

Is it any wonder that ordinary Americans can all agree that our democracy is broken, because there is too much money in politics?

Maybe there is too much transparency in government? Individually, citizens may be protected by the secret ballot box, but Congress has no such protection from corporate bullying and bribery. The tsunami rise of the cost of running for office since the 1970s has compounded their reliance on special interest Political Action Committees.

Our slide to self-destruction began after Congress lost all its privacy, with the quiet passage of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 under the guise of "transparency."

Maybe it is no accident that Oregon Rep. Julie Parish, who moved with her House Bill 3505 to quash safeguards now in place that shield our state's elected officials (with her double speak — that it was about money in politics and democracy), is from the "right" side of the aisle? Maybe complete transparency since 1970 has no doubt exposed the American people to the hijacking of our democracy? Maybe, with less transparency in 2008-2009, the

Riverfront Vision Plan would never have come to pass?

I may be called grey-haired. However, in a time where red is blue, war is peace, freedom is slavery, ignorance is strength, right is wrong, and transparency is confused — maybe being able to remember is not such a bad thing.

DANI WILLIAMS, ESQ.
Astoria

No gossip

I am writing regarding the Mouth of the Columbia review of Firehouse Grill ("The Firehouse Grill: With quality ingredients and proper preparation, Seaside restaurant makes simplicity sing," *Coast Week-end*, June 4).

My husband, Dennis, and I purchased the Firehouse Grill and took over on May 12. In the review, which hit the stands three weeks later, the Mouth states that we own Dooger's, and that is not so. I love social media and reviews, which over 95 percent of the time are favorable for the restaurants we do own: McKeown's Restaurant and Bar, The Irish Pub at McKeown's, Nonni's Italian Bistro and now Firehouse Grill.

I appreciate reviews because they are normally unbiased personal experiences, and there is always constructive criticism that can be taken and used to provide a better product or experience for people. I do, however, think that the last part of the Firehouse Grill review was focused on hearsay and projections of change and declining food quality.

In my opinion, that should have been left out of this review, and we should be given

the chance to prove ourselves to the Mouth by an actual visit or experience, and not what gossip is going around town.

NANCY MCKEOWN
Seaside

Change votes

Four Astoria City Council members (Cindy Price, Zetty Nemlowill, Russ Warr and Arline LaMear) voted to allow developers to construct 35-foot-high buildings over the Columbia River along the western Riverwalk, thus depriving walkers and trolley riders, as well as patrons of the Ship Inn and Stephanie's Cabin, of the current expansive views of the river and bridge.

Monday's council meeting includes a required second reading and vote on the Bridge "No Vista" Plan. That offers Councilor Price an opportunity to change her vote to reflect what her constituents have said loudly and clearly — that they do not want tall structures blocking views of the river. It is sad that Councilor Nemlowill, who represents the affected area, supported such construction. The council could have voted for a maximum of 25 or 12 feet or even bank-high, but they chose three-story buildings instead.

When Price, Nemlowill and LaMear campaign for re-election in three years, many of us will recall their votes on this "No Vista" plan, and remind others that they chose to ignore the voices of Astoria's residents. I doubt that their votes will be featured in their campaign literature.

Readers can find email addresses on the city website for contacting council members at www.astoria.or.us/City_Council.aspx, and the public can be heard at the 7 p.m. city council meeting on Monday.

We also need to thank Councilor Drew Herzig for his vote against the plan as currently written. Perhaps he and others can convince our council to modify and improve this plan before our splendid views of the Columbia River and the Astoria Bridge are merely a memory.

MARY LANGLEY
Astoria

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