

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



STEPHEN A. FORRESTER, *Editor & Publisher*  
 LAURA SELLERS, *Managing Editor*  
 BETTY SMITH, *Advertising Manager*  
 CARL EARL, *Systems Manager*  
 JOHN D. BRUIJN, *Production Manager*  
 DEBRA BLOOM, *Business Manager*  
 HEATHER RAMSDELL, *Circulation Manager*

## Where does Sen. Wyden stand on Oregon LNG?

*Senator says the right thing, but Mayor LaMear wants clarity*

You don't have to take a poll to know where Clatsop County is on LNG. In various guises, LNG has been on the county ballot some two or three times.

On each occasion, the proponents of siting a liquefied natural gas terminal at the mouth of the Columbia River have lost.

The present makeup of the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners was determined by opposition to LNG. Commissioner Dirk Rohne was the vanguard. He served as a lonely voice among commissioners who went to extraordinary lengths to stack the deck in favor of LNG.

It is also worth remembering the scant public process that gave a lease to Oregon LNG's predecessor, Calpine, did not amount to a county-wide discussion.

The decade we have spent dealing with the LNG elephant is Peter Gearin's bad joke on Clatsop County. Gearin was executive director of the Port of Astoria. He made an absurdly bad deal on behalf of the Port's taxpayers and for the state of Oregon — from which the Port leases the Skipanon property on where Oregon LNG hopes to site a terminal.

In this context it is heartening to hear U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden demystify the remarks of Peter Hansen, chief executive of Oregon LNG. Hansen dismissed the role of local government in siting the terminal and its pipelines.

Sen. Wyden said Hansen's remarks were "way over the line." Derrick DePledge reported Wyden's statement during his weekend visit to Astoria.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown — during her June visit here — said "there's absolutely no question" the state has oversight responsibility on the Skipanon site.

Astoria Mayor Arline LaMear is correct that Wyden needs to tell us more clearly where he stands on the Oregon LNG proposal. "We'd like to have a straight answer on where he is on this particular project," said Mayor LaMear.

If Wyden needs an unequivocal reference point on where political sentiment in this county stands, he can — as Yogi Berra famously said — "You can look it up."

## The wasted gift of Donald Trump

By FRANK BRUNI

*New York Times News Service*

I keep reading that Donald Trump is wrecking the Republican Party.

I keep hearing that he's a threat to the fortunes of every other Republican presidential candidate, because he sullies the brand and puts them in an impossible position.

What bunk. The truth is that he's an opportunity for them as golden as the namesake nameplates on his phallic towers, if only they would seize it.

The brand was plenty sullied before he lent his huff and his hair to the task. And by giving his Republican rivals a perfect foil, he also gives them a perfect chance to rehabilitate and redeem the party.

As it stands now, he's using them.

If they had any guts, they could use him.

They could piggyback on the outside attention that he receives, answering his unhinged tweets and idiotic utterances with something sane and smart, knowing that it, too, would get prominent notice.

They could define themselves in the starkest possible contrast to him, calling him out as the bully and bigot that he is. Then he wouldn't own the story, because the narrative would be about cooler heads and kinder hearts in the party staring down one of its most needlessly divisive ambassadors and saying: Enough. No more. We're serious people at the limit of our patience for provocateurs.

There was a hint of this last weekend, when Jeb Bush, whose wife is Mexican-American, lashed out at Trump's broad-brush comments about Mexican immigrants crossing into the United States with an agenda of drugs and rape.

Bush labeled those remarks "extraordinarily ugly" and "way out of the mainstream" and said that there's "no tolerance" for them.

But he didn't exactly volunteer that assessment. It came in response to a reporter's question, and it came more than two weeks after Trump's offense.

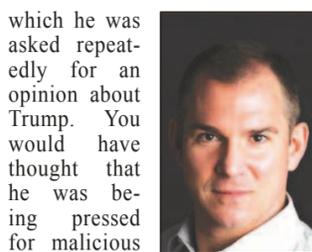
Neither he nor Marco Rubio exhibited any hurry in distancing themselves from Trump, though both of them trumpet their personal biographies as proof that they're sensitive to Latino immigrants.

On Fox Business on Tuesday, Rubio gave a pathetic master class in cowardly evasion, stammering his way through an interview in



AP Photo/Seth Wenig

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump talks to reporters as he arrives to a fund raising event at a golf course in the Bronx borough of New York, Monday, July 6, 2015.



Frank Bruni

which he was asked repeatedly for an opinion about Trump. You would have thought that he was being pressed for malicious gossip about the Easter bunny.

He never did manage to upbraid Trump, though he was careful to mention the "legitimate issue" of border security that Trump had raised.

As in 2012, Republicans can't summon the courage to take on the dark heroes of the party's lunatic fringe. As in 2012, this could cost them dearly.

The Charleston, South Carolina, church massacre and subsequent debate over the Confederate battle flag afforded them an ideal moment to talk with passion and poetry about racial healing.

But the leading contenders reacted in fashions either sluggish, terse, muffled or all three. They showed more interest in fleeing the subject than in grabbing profitable hold of it.

Trump's rant about immigrants, which he has since amplified, was another squandered moment.

Chris Christie could have made good on his boasts about always telling it like it is and being unconstrained by politesse. Instead he made clear that he liked Trump and considered him a friend. That soft crunching sound you heard was the supposedly hard-charging New Jersey governor walking on eggshells.

Rand Paul claims the desire and ability to expand the party's reach to more minorities. So where's his takedown of Trump?

**If they had any guts, they could use him.**

Bush has said that a politician must be willing to lose the party's nomination in order to win the general election, but that philosophy can't end with his allegiance to the Common Core. It has to include an unblinking acknowledgment of his party's craziness whenever and wherever it flares.

Trump's hold on voters stems largely from his lack of any filter and from his directness, traits that they don't see in establishment candidates. So his fellow Republicans' filtered, indirect approach to him just gives him more power.

And while he should be irrelevant, he's becoming ever more relevant, because he's exposing their timidity and caution.

They're wrong to try to ignore him, because the media won't do that and because he's probably going to qualify for the debates.

Looking ahead to the first of them, conservative pundit George Will bought into the notion of Trump as an ineradicable pest who "says something hideously inflammatory, which is all he knows how to say, and then what do the other nine people onstage do?"

Oh, please. That's hardly an existential crisis. It's a prompt for an overdue smidgen of valor.

Without any hesitation, they tell him that he's a disgrace. Without any hedging, they tell him that he's absurd.

It's the truth. And for the Republican Party, it might just be transformative.

## The inspiring courage of small things

By DAVID BROOKS

*New York Times News Service*

I thought I knew the basic life story of my friend Clemantine Wamariya.

She was born in Rwanda 27 years ago.

When she was 6 — though she didn't understand it — the genocide began and her world started shrinking. Her father stopped going to work after dark. Her family ate dinner with the lights off.

To escape the mass murder, Clemantine and her older sister, Claire, were moved from house to house. One night they were told to crawl through a sweet potato field and then walk away — not toward anything, just away.

They crossed the Akanyaru River (Clemantine thought the dead bodies floating in it were just sleeping) and into Burundi. Living off fruit, all her toenails fell out. She spent the rest of her young girlhood in refugee camps in eight African nations.

Claire kept them on the move, in search of a normal life. Clemantine wrote her name in the dust at various stops, praying somehow a family member would see it. One day, they barely survived a six-hour boat ride across Lake Tanganyika fleeing into Tanzania. Their struggles in the camps, for water and much else, were almost perfectly designed to give a sense that life is arbitrary.

In 2000, Claire got them refugee status in the United States through the International Organization for Migration. Claire went to work as a hotel maid in Chicago. A few years later, Clemantine was one of 50 winners of Oprah Winfrey's high school essay contest.

In the middle of the 2006 show celebrating the winners, Oprah

brought Clemantine and Claire on stage. Oprah asked when was the last time the girls had seen their parents. It had been 12 years. Then Oprah gave them a surprise: "Your family is here!" Her parents, brother and sister had been found in Africa, and now walked onstage. They all fell into one another's arms. Clemantine's knees gave out, but her mother held her up.

Clemantine's story, as I knew it then, has a comforting arc: separation, perseverance, reunion and joy. It's the kind of clean, inspiring story that many of us tell, in less dramatic form, about our own lives — with clearly marked moments of struggle and overcoming.

But Clemantine and Elizabeth Weil just wrote a more detailed version of her story for the online magazine *Matter*, and the reality is not so neat. For one thing, Clemantine never really reconciled with her family. After the Oprah taping they returned to Claire's apartment. "My father kept smiling, like someone he mistrusted was taking pictures of him.

Claire remained catatonic; I thought she'd finally gone crazy, for real. I sat on Claire's couch, looking at my strange new siblings, the ones that had replaced me and Claire. I fell asleep crying." The rest of the family fled back home to Africa the following Monday.

At every stop along the way, the pat narrative of Clemantine's life is complicated by the gritty, mottled nature of human relationships. The refugee worker who married Claire and fathered her children turned out to be more a burden than a savior. The sisters' psyches were not



David Brooks

unscathed. "Claire made a hard, subconscious calculus: She could survive, and maybe enable me to survive, too, but only if she cast off emotional responsibility, only if she refused to take on how anything or anybody felt."

Clemantine struggled to reconcile her old life with this one. A teacher she had at the Hotchkiss School gave a class a thought experiment. You're a ferry captain on a sinking boat. Do you toss overboard the old passenger or the young one? Clemantine lost it: "Do you want to know what's that really like? This is an abstract question to you?"

At Yale, she couldn't understand her own behavior. "Why did I drink only tea, never cold water? Why did I cringe when the sun turned red?"

Clemantine is now an amazing young woman. Her superb and artful essay reminded me that while the genocide was horrific, the constant mystery of life is how loved ones get along with one another.

We work hard to cram our lives into legible narratives. But we live in the fog of reality. Whether you have survived a trauma or not, the psyche is still a dark forest of scars and tender spots. Each relationship is intricacy piled upon intricacy, fertile ground for misunderstanding and mistreatment.

When she was a young girl, Clemantine displayed the large courage to endure genocide. In this essay she displays the courage of small things: the courage to live with feelings wide open even after trauma; the maturity to accept unanswerable ambiguity; the tenacity to seek coherence after arbitrary cruelty; the ability to create tenacious bonds that have some give to them, to allow for the mistakes others make; the unwillingness to settle for the simple, fake story; and the capacity to look at life in all its ugly complexity.

## US must reduce deadly use of force

*International newspaper points out startling statistics*

By one credible count, 584 people have been killed by police in the U.S. so far this year.

Such a statistic deserves to be a shocking call to action. See [tinyurl.com/KillingsStats](http://tinyurl.com/KillingsStats).

The *Guardian* newspaper's database demonstrates the difficulties of easily categorizing these deadly interactions between civilians and law-enforcement personnel. Even coming up with an accurate total is hard — there is no nationwide reporting requirement for this official taking of a life, the ultimate civil right.

Sparked by notorious shootings of African-American men, closer scrutiny reveals that 287 white men and women have died as of July 7. Blacks, with a total of 159 deaths so far, have a death rate of 3.81 per 1 million of population, compared to 1.68 for Hispanic residents and 1.45 for whites.

Looking for example at a random single day of police-related deaths, May 7, five people died. They ranged in age from 18 to 72. Most were white. They died in California, New York, Georgia, Florida and North Carolina. The circumstances of the 18-year-old's death suggests he committed "suicide by cop." A 21-year-old allegedly tried to run down a deputy with a car after officers responded to reports of a "suspicious couple knocking on doors." The 72-year-old, armed with a knife, was reported by his neighbors to be suicidal. Police said they shot him after he rushed at them.

It's obvious that in many cases the police are pulled into personal crises, volatile situations in which they must do their best to contain the danger. It's safe to say that being on the delivering end of someone's death must haunt most officers for the rest of their lives. Judging by how seldom officers are prosecuted — and even more rarely convicted — of being trigger-happy, U.S. citizens are clearly disinclined to second-guess these life-and-death decisions made in the heat of the moment.

And yet the U.S. is profoundly beyond the bounds of the developed world when it comes to police-caused deaths. Here are some of *The Guardian's* more disturbing findings:

- 27 percent of people killed by U.S. police so far in 2015 had mental health issues.

- Black Americans killed by police are twice as unlikely to be unarmed as white people. Thirty-two percent of blacks killed by police were carrying no weapon, compared to the 15 percent of whites who were unarmed. So far this year, 102 unarmed people have died in interactions with police.

- Oregon, with seven deaths brought about by law enforcement so far in 2015, ranks 16th among the 50 states and D.C. in per capita fatalities. Washington, with 11, rates 25th per capita.

- England and Wales total 55 fatal police shootings in the last 24 years. The U.S. had 24 fatal police shootings in the first 24 days of 2015. Canada averages 25 fatal police shootings a year, whereas California has racked up 72 such deaths in 2015.

Rolling this death rate back to something less startling will be a complex task. Better nationwide police training in using nondeadly force has to be part of the answer. Enhancing citizen awareness and conveying our expectations is another. Stepping up to adequately fund mental-health treatment and interventions is another. Civilian review boards provide crucial independent oversight in jurisdictions large enough to warrant them.

Internal police policies must emphasize this point, well made in the city of Houston: "Above all, this department values the safety of its employees and the public. Likewise it believes that police officers should use firearms with a high degree of restraint. Officers' use of firearms, therefore, shall never be considered routine and is permissible only in defense of life and then only after all alternative means have been exhausted."