

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

Quit distorting state's assisted suicide law

Misinformation industry turns law into something it's not

Oregon's self-image is about an iconoclastic, pioneering spirit. Oregon enacted a bottle bill in 1971. Nine states have imitated it. Oregon voters agreed to death with dignity legislation — physician-assisted suicide — in 1994. Two states — Washington state and Vermont — have followed Oregon's lead.

Every time another state, such as Massachusetts, puts this proposal on the ballot, eyes turn once again to Oregon. Not surprisingly, there is a misinformation industry that aims to turn Oregon's law into something it's not.

Last week's contribution to relitigating Oregon's law was Dr. William L. Toffler's article on the opinion page of *The Wall Street Journal*. Toffler is an Oregon physician and professor of family medicine at Oregon Health and Science University.

Dr. Toffler is accurate in saying that Oregon voters narrowly approved physician-assisted suicide. The ballot initiative won 51 percent of the vote. But he failed to tell WSJ readers that when *The Oregonian* and the Catholic Conference of Bishops promoted the law's repeal in 1997, the "no" vote was 59 percent. In other words, the law had gained credibility with time.

Dr. Toffler's basic mischaracterization of the experience in Oregon is that "there has been a profound shift in attitude toward medical care — new fear and secrecy, and a fixation on death."

While it is true that nationally there is more candor about issues of death and dying — as the Baby Boom demographic moves into its seventh decade

Alderbrook discussions put community wishes first

Alderbrook is very much its own place, a self-contained residential enclave that even long-term residents elsewhere in the county and region may barely notice as they pass above it on U.S. Highway 30. Residents like it this way, as they made quite clear at last Thursday's town hall meeting to consider Alderbrook's component of Astoria's Riverfront Vision Plan.

The Neighborhood Greenway along the Alderbrook waterfront essentially just needs to be left the way it is. Residents at the town hall said they want their river views, water access and village-like attributes preserved. Unlike much other waterfront along the small Columbia River peninsula that Astoria occupies, there don't appear to be near-term threats to this community vision — no big hotels are on the horizon.

Leaving Alderbrook completely alone, from the standpoint of active planning, would not be advisable. It only takes a brief attempt to travel from one end of town to the other this summer to realize that Astoria has been discovered. All its neighborhoods need proactive measures to stay ahead of development pressures. If heavy traffic, parking shortages and other trends continue to be problematic and are not simply byproducts of one summer's inland heat and idyllic coastal weather, pressure will rapidly grow from all residents — not just those of Alderbrook — to find better ways to hold the line against urban-type encroachments.

Astoria has relatively sophisticated planning efforts and an ac-

— there is no broad trend of discussion in Oregon.

The number of Oregonians who have used physician-assisted suicide is relatively small. And that was always the expectation. It is not forced on anyone. On the contrary, a patient must ask to use it. And the patient must take the barbiturates on their own.

The reality is that many Oregon physicians choose not take part in the practice. That often makes it difficult for a patient, especially in a rural area, to obtain the barbiturates which the law designates. Some five years ago this newspaper described the wrenching experience that Rod Gramson of Astoria had in helping his partner use physician-assisted suicide.

The initiative's opponents in 1994 based their case on religion and morality. What the opponents misread was a basic motivation for the death with dignity movement — widespread mistrust of the medical profession on end of life choices. It is no secret that some physicians are not good at pain and symptom control.

An excellent outcome of the law, which Dr. Toffler does not mention, is that hospice and palliative care have gained increased visibility and emphasis in Oregon.

tively engaged citizenry. Possibly the bigger shoreline conservation challenges are elsewhere.

Pacific County, Wash., and its four incorporated cities are in the midst of a roughly once-a-decade revamp of their Shoreline Master Programs, a state-mandated planning process that is Washington state's expansive effort to mandate a thorough vision for preservation and growth along the waterfront.

The Washington State Department of Ecology is operating on a policy of no net loss of wetlands, and is generally cranking down on past practices that allowed more in the way of mitigating for shoreline losses by preserving wetlands elsewhere. There is an increasing awareness in the state that past practices have not worked very well, especially around Puget Sound.

In Clatsop County beyond Astoria, perhaps the biggest potential impacts to the shoreline would stem from the proposed Oregon LNG project on the Skipanon Peninsula. Not only would there be a massive LNG storage facility, but its installation might open the door to more industrial development on a waterfront where it might not be welcome.

As in Alderbrook, the key with all these decisions is for area citizens to be actively involved in voicing preferences for future directions. Often, they will want a minimum of change. Sometimes, they may opt for development and associated jobs. But in every case, well-informed community desires should take the lead.

JEB BUSH'S SLOG

The tortoise and the hair

By FRANK BRUNI
New York Times News Service

In politics, the smallest things often turn out to be the most telling ones, and so it is with the man who was supposed to be the Republican front-runner, who once inspired such rapture among party elders and whose entrance into the presidential race they yearned and clamored for.

They not only got their wish, they got it with punctuation: Jeb! That's Jeb Bush's logo, and the exclamation point is the tell. None of the other Republican presidential candidates has anything like it. None of the Democrats either. It's a declaration of passion that only someone worried about a deficit of it would issue. Methinks thou doth exclaim too much.

Before Bush announced his candidacy, talk of his vulnerabilities focused largely on certain positions — his defense of Common Core educational standards, his advocacy for immigration reform — that were anathema to many voters in the Republican primaries. He was sure to catch flak.

But catching fire is his bigger problem. He can't do it. In a bloated field of bellicose candidates, he's a whisper, a blur, starved of momentum, bereft of urgency and apt to make news because he stumbles, not because he soars. Can he soar? Or even sprint?

"I'm the tortoise in the race," he told a group of voters in Florida not long ago. "But I'm a joyful tortoise."

And Donald Trump's a demented peacock and I'm a crotchety hippo. Reverse anthropomorphism is a fun game, but if you're playing it in the service of selling yourself, best not to summon a sluggish creature with a muted affect and an impenetrable shell.

Republicans should have seen this turtle coming. In some sense they did. Bush's fans and backers praised him as a thoughtful "policy wonk" and conceded that he wasn't any dynamo at the lectern or on the trail.

But they downgraded the importance of dynamism, maybe because they didn't expect so much competition,

including Trump. (It's "the race between the tortoise and the bad hair," cracked Jay Leno last week.) They couldn't envision the way in which 16 rivals would rob Bush of clear distinction and definition.

Sure, he speaks Spanish and has a Mexican-born wife, but Marco Rubio also speaks Spanish and has two Cuban-born parents. Sure, he was twice elected governor of a state that's not reliably red, but so were Scott Walker, Chris Christie and John Kasich.

He's not the most eloquent or the most inspiring, so his backers began to pitch him as the most adult. But at that first debate, Kasich stole even that superlative from him.

What's left? He's raised the most money, some of which he'll use for television ads much sooner than anyone had anticipated. He'll try to buy the oomph that he can't organically generate.

Oomph is what that big speech last week — in which he blamed Hillary Rodham Clinton for the rise of the Islamic State — was largely about. He was flexing his audacity and independence, showing that his surname wouldn't cow him from going after a Democratic rival on any matter, including Iraq. It took gall to edit his older brother out of the diatribe. It took guts to go with a diatribe in the first place.

Did it help? Polls suggest not. A CNN/ORC survey that was released Tuesday showed that he doesn't fare nearly as well as Trump when Republican voters are asked whom they trust



Frank Bruni

most on the economy, on immigration and on battling Islamic extremists.

He runs afoul of the moment. Voters right now are more enamored of outsiders than usual, as the traction of not just Trump but also two other Republican candidates who have never held elective office — Ben Carson and Carly Fiorina — demonstrates.

Voters have had enough of protocol and pieties. Thus Trump thrives in a party that he constantly browbeats and shows no real loyalty toward, while Bernie Sanders flourishes among Democrats though he has repeatedly railed against them and doesn't technically identify as one.

For some alienated voters, supporting either of these two insurgents is the same as raising a middle finger to establishment politicians and to politics as usual, and tactful, tasteful Bush can never be a middle finger. More like a pinkie.

The pinkie may prevail. In the Bush camp there's a theory, or perhaps an anxiety-quelling fantasy, that the Trump mania and the related craziness will benefit Bush, who can methodically build support and incrementally lengthen his stride while the glare and heat are on others.

Trump burns out, the field eventually winnows and Bush is saved by a superlative after all. He's the most durable candidate.

It's a plausible scenario. But it's hardly a joyful one. And there's only one way to punctuate it — with a question mark.

The immigration swamp

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER
Washington Post Writers Group

"This was not a subject that was on anybody's mind until I brought it up at my announcement."

— Donald Trump, on immigration, Republican debate, Aug. 6

Not on anyone's mind? For years, immigration has been the subject of near-constant, often bitter argument within the GOP. But it is true that Trump has brought the debate to a new place — first, with his announcement speech, about whether Mexican migrants are really rapists, and now with the somewhat more nuanced Trump plan.

Much of it — visa tracking, E-Verify, withholding funds from sanctuary cities — predates Trump. Even building the Great Wall is not particularly new. (I, for one, have been advocating that in this space since 2006.) Dominating the discussion, however, are his two policy innovations: (a) abolition of birthright citizenship and (b) mass deportation.

Birthright citizenship. If you are born in the United States, you are an American citizen. So says the 14th Amendment. Barring some esoteric and radically new jurisprudence, abolition would require amending the Constitution. Which would take years and great political effort. And make the GOP anathema to Hispanic-Americans for a generation.

And for what? Birthright citizenship is a symptom, not a cause. If you regain control of the border, the number of birthright babies fades to insignificance. The time and energy it would take to amend the Constitution are far more usefully deployed securing the border.

Moreover, the real issue is not the birthright babies themselves, but the chain migration that follows. It turns one baby into an imported village.

Chain migration, however, is not a constitutional right. It's a result of statutes and regulations. These can be readily changed. That should be the focus, not a quixotic constitutional battle.

Mass deportation. Last Sunday, Trump told NBC's Chuck Todd that 11 million illegal immigrants must leave the country. Although once they've been kicked out, we will let "the good ones" back in.

On its own terms, this is crackpot. Wouldn't you save a lot just on Mayflower moving costs if you chose the "good ones" first — before sending SWAT teams to turf families out of their homes, loading them on buses and dumping them on the other side of the Rio Grande?

Less frivolously, it is estimated by the conservative American Action Forum that mass deportation would take about 20 years and cost about \$500 billion for all the police, judges, lawyers and enforcement agents — and bus drivers! — needed to expel 11 million people.

This would all be merely ridiculous if it weren't morally obscene. Forcibly evict 11 million people from their homes? It can't happen. It shouldn't happen. And, of course, it won't ever happen. But because it's the view of the Republican front-runner, every other candidate is now required to react. So instead of debating border security, guest-worker programs and sanctuary cities — where Republicans are



Charles Krauthammer

on firm moral and political ground — they are forced into a debate about a repulsive fantasy.

Which, for the Republican Party, is also political poison. Mitt Romney lost the Hispanic vote by 44 points and he was advocating only self-deportation. Now the party is discussing forced deportation.

It is not just Hispanics who will be alienated. Romney lost the Asian vote, too. By 47 points. And many non-minorities will be offended by the idea of rounding up 11 million people, the vast majority of whom are law-abiding members of their communities.

Donald Trump has every right to advance his ideas. He is not to be begrudged his masterly showmanship, his relentless candor or his polling success. I strongly oppose the idea of ostracizing anyone from the GOP or the conservative movement. On whose authority? Let the people decide.

But that is not to say that he should be exempt from normal scrutiny or from consideration of the effect of his candidacy on conservatism's future. If you are a conservative alarmed at the country's direction and committed to retaking the White House, you should be concerned about what Trump's ascendancy is doing to the chances of that happening.

The Democrats' presumptive candidate is flailing badly. Republicans have an unusually talented field with a good chance of winning back the presidency. Do they really want to be dragged into the swamps — right now, on immigration — that will make that prospect electorally impossible?

Yes, I understand. The anger, the frustration, etc., etc., that Trump is channeling. But how are these alleviated by yelling "I'm mad as hell" — and proceeding to elect Hillary Clinton?

Where to write

• **U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D):** 2338 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C., 20515. Phone: 202-225-0855. Fax: 202-225-9497. District office: 12725 SW Millikan Way, Suite 220, Beaverton, OR 97005. Phone: 503-469-6010. Fax: 503-326-5066. Web: bonamici.house.gov/

• **U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D):** 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753. Web: www.merkley.senate.gov

• **U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D):** 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510. Phone: 202-224-5244. Web: www.wyden.senate.gov

• **State Rep. Brad Witt (D):** State Capitol, 900 Court Street N.E., H-373, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1431. Web: www.leg.state.or.us/witt/Email: rep.bradwitt@state.or.us

• **State Rep. Deborah Boone (D):** 900 Court St. N.E., H-481, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1432. Email: rep.deborah.boone@

state.or.us District office: P.O. Box 928, Cannon Beach, OR 97110. Phone: 503-986-1432. Web: www.leg.state.or.us/boone/

• **State Sen. Betsy Johnson (D):** State Capitol, 900 Court St. N.E., S-314, Salem, OR 97301. Telephone: 503-986-1716. Email: sen.betsyjohnson@state.or.us Web: www.betsyjohnson.com District Office: P.O. Box R, Scappoose, OR 97056. Phone: 503-543-4046. Fax: 503-543-5296. Astoria office phone: 503-338-1280.