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ONE DOLLAR

REPORTER TALKS CONFLICT A front line report from Ferguson

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

The protests and civil disorder that erupted in Ferguson, Missouri, after white police officer Darren Wilson shot an unarmed black teenager named Michael Brown to death Aug. 9, 2014, and, later, after a grand jury chose not to indict Wilson, triggered fierce debate on such hot-button issues as police brutality and race relations in the United States.

And at the center of it all was the media, each news outlet shining a focused but limited light on the action.

Reporter Nigel Duara, who covered the Ferguson demonstrations for the Associated Press, shared his experience at the Columbia Forum Thursday evening at Columbia Memorial Hospital's Community Center.

But his talk — "When the media becomes the story" — didn't just recount the tense standoffs and civil unrest, the riots and the violence, the

tear gas, smoke grenades and rubber bullets. He analyzed the media itself, its role in shaping the many narratives around Ferguson, how journalists disseminate information nowadays and how the masses consume it.

"(Ferguson is) a place I don't feel is very well understood, even by the people who covered it, and that includes me," Duara said.

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Joshua Bessex/*The Daily Astorian*
Nigel Duara, of the Los Angeles Times, speaks during his presentation at the Columbia Forum Thursday.

AREA POLICE CHIEFS

Crime & conversation



Photos by Joshua Bessex/*The Daily Astorian*

Astoria Police Chief Brad Johnston, right, speaks during the Lower Columbia Diversity Project's "Cops and Community: A Local Perspective" discussion Thursday. Police on the panel included (from left): Seaside Police Chief Dave Ham, Warrenton Police Chief Matt Workman and Cannon Beach Police Chief Jason Schermerhorn.

Police chiefs, residents discuss how to improve interaction

By KATIE WILSON
The Daily Astorian

Astoria is far away from Ferguson, Missouri, where protests shook the St. Louis suburb last year following the death of Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager who was shot and killed by a white police officer.

The climate — socially, culturally, environmentally — is different here. So is the history, the landscape and the economics.

But in light of the Ferguson shooting and other similar incidents that have shaken the nation, the Lower Columbia Diversity Project saw a need to address how police work intersects with the community.

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Astoria Police Chief Brad Johnston speaks during the Lower Columbia Diversity Project's "Cops and Community: A Local Perspective" discussion.



Principle Power

Principle Power, a Seattle-based company, needs a guaranteed stream of money from Oregon ratepayers to move forward with an offshore wind project.

Offshore wind project needs money

Lawmakers failed to agree on financing

By HILLARY BORRUD
Capital Bureau

A committee appointed by Gov. Kate Brown has begun work to figure out how to pay for what would be the first offshore wind project on the West Coast.

The Seattle-based company Principle Power needs a guaranteed stream of money from Oregon ratepayers to move forward with the pilot project known as WindFloat Pacific, which could have up to five wind turbines as tall as the Space Needle and cover as much as 15 square miles in the deep ocean off Coos Bay.

A bill in the state Legislature this year would have required investor-owned utilities to purchase power from the WindFloat Pacific project, but the legislation died amid opposition by utilities, a consumer group and industrial businesses. They argued that electricity from offshore wind costs three to four times more than from onshore wind. The commercial fishing and processing industries also opposed the bill and continue to raise concerns about the project.

Susan Chambers, a board member of the Southern Oregon Ocean Resource Coalition in Coos Bay and deputy director of the Portland-based West Coast Seafood Processors Association, said that during the committee's first meeting in September, it sounded as though state officials were determined to find a way to fund the project.

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Seniors will have to find new Medicare plans

Regence of Oregon will no longer offer Advantage Plan option as of January

By ERICK BENGEL
The Daily Astorian

Choosing the right Medicare option can be confusing, but for more than 1,000 seniors in Clatsop County, the decision this year is even more difficult.

Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon will no longer offer a Medicare Advantage Plan as of Jan. 1, a change that will require these seniors to find an alternative within 63 days of losing their coverage.

If they don't enroll in a new Ad-

vantage plan or a Medigap supplemental insurance plan, the seniors will only be covered by Medicare's hospital and medical insurance and will not have any prescription drug coverage.

"Regence has a responsibility to all of our members to provide high-quality, cost-effective health insurance that is sustainable for the long-term," Jared Ishkanian, strategic communications manager for Regence, said in an email. "Continuing to offer Medicare Advantage plans in Clatsop County in 2016 would have

forced us to significantly increase costs for all our members."

Medicare's regular open enrollment period, when beneficiaries can change their Medicare health plans and prescription drug coverage for the next year, started Thursday and runs to Dec. 7. Seniors dropped from Regence's Advantage Plan will have a special 63-day enrollment period starting Jan. 1 to sign up for an Advantage plan through a different company.

Regence, one of the state's largest health insurance providers, continues to offer supplemental insurance through Medigap plans, along with

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MEDICARE CLASSES

"Get a Grasp of Medicare" classes are available to explain Medicare's ins-and-outs for people looking to explore their options or make changes to their plans.

- Seaside, 10 a.m. to noon Oct. 26, Providence Seaside Hospital, Education Room A, 725 S. Wahanna Road
- Warrenton: 3 to 5 p.m. Oct. 27, NorthWest Senior and Disability Services Conference Room, 2002 S.E. Chokeberry Ave.
- Astoria: 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Nov. 10, Columbia Memorial Hospital Education Center, Coho Room, 2021 Marine Dr.
- Warrenton: 2 to 4 p.m. Nov. 19, NorthWest Senior and Disability Services Conference Room, 2002 S.E. Chokeberry Ave.

No registration is required for the class. For information, call Lewis at 503-861-4202.

