

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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## What are they waiting for?

*Another major Oregon school massacre?*

When Kip Kinkel killed his parents, two children and wounded 25 at Thurston High School in 1998, Oregon was a novice at gun massacres. Then we had the Clackamas Town Center 2012 shootings (two dead, one wounded). And now the Umpqua Community College shootings.

Former Gov. John Kitzhaber set the model for how Oregon elected officials respond to such incidents. Following the Clackamas Town Center shootings, Kitzhaber was scheduled to deliver a State of the State address. In that talk, Kitzhaber expressed sorrow but offered no plan of action. That was more than remarkable, because Kitzhaber — as he so often reminded us — was an emergency room physician.

Continuing in the trend of putting off substantive response, legislative leaders have struck a “What, me worry?” pose. Here is how Hillary Borrud reported the story in last Friday’s *Oregon Capital Insider*: “A couple of representatives, both former police officers, wanted to form a legislative committee to work on possible legislation aimed at preventing similar shootings in the future, but so far there does not appear to be enough interest in the idea.”

“State Rep. Andy Olson, R-Albany, reached out to our office with that idea,” Lindsey O’Brien, communications director for House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, wrote in an

email Oct. 8. ‘At this point, the speaker is focused on supporting the immediate needs of the victims and their families, the emergency responders, and the greater Roseburg community.’ Olson worked 29 years for the Oregon State Police.

“Rep. Jeff Barker, D-Aloha, also worked for the Oregon State Police and for the Portland Police Bureau. Barker sent his request to form a legislative committee to House Majority Leader Jennifer Williamson, D-Portland.

“I spoke with her and she wants to have some research (university level) done so we have something to work with before we just try to ‘do something,’” Barker wrote in an email this week. Obviously this will be a tough issue or we would have solved it already.”

Malcolm Gladwell in the current issue of *The New Yorker*, notes that, “Since Sandy Hook, there have been more than 140 school shootings in the United States.” Those include two in Oregon. What are Speaker Kotek and Rep. Williamson waiting for? The next big Oregon massacre?

## ‘Anything goes’ is not an acceptable standard

*Border Patrol should have high standards*

Fewer than 4 in 10 U.S. citizens ever have direct contact with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. An even smaller proportion come into contact with border enforcement agents along the nation’s land boundary with Mexico, where the economic composition of travelers tends to skew downward. For most of us, the Border Patrol is a vague concept, generally charged with keeping undocumented workers from crossing into the U.S. at will, while also working under the umbrella of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to protect citizens from drug smugglers and terrorists.

With tacit permission from Congress, the Border Patrol has for decades been granted broad latitude to carry out its mission with a minimum of oversight — almost amounting to a kind of “Don’t ask, don’t tell” approach.

Internal documents disclosed this year as a result of tenacious litigation by the American Civil Liberties Union suggest a need for federal lawmakers and the Department of Homeland Security to take a more proactive role in making sure the Border Patrol adheres to high standards and does not permit agent misbehavior at odds with American laws and values. According to a *New*

*York Times* summary ([tinyurl.com/NYTBorderPatrol](http://tinyurl.com/NYTBorderPatrol)), border checkpoint agents have been repeatedly accused by drivers of “improper gunplay, racial profiling, excessive roughness and verbal abuse.”

For example, “Last year, in southeastern Arizona, a military veteran said his children shuddered with fear in the back seat as agents repeatedly asked him if the children were really his.

Since Jan. 1, 2010, 33 people have died in encounters with border and customs agents, according to the Times. Only one agent faces criminal charges. While pursuing accountability, family members find it extremely difficult to learn the names of agents involved in deaths.

There have been some improvements, along with a dawning awareness by department administrators and Congress that “anything goes” is not an acceptable way of greeting citizens and others arriving in the U.S. This Tuesday, Customs and Border Protection reported a 26 percent decline in use-of-force incidents — 768 in the 2015 fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, down from 1,037 in the 2014 fiscal year.

Though there will be those who approve of or don’t care about obnoxious official behavior along our borders, this is a case when too much bad-acting threatens to undercut public confidence in an agency that is vitally important to national security.



## Game over for Clinton primary rivals

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

*Washington Post Writer's Group*

I repeat: Unless she’s indicted, Hillary Clinton will win the Democratic nomination. I wrote that six weeks ago, amid fevered dreams of a Clinton collapse and a Joe Biden rescue. That those were a mirage is all the more obvious after Tuesday’s debate. The reason, then as now, is simple: Clinton has no competition.

She’s up against three ciphers and one endearing, gesticulating, slightly unmoored old man. If Joe Biden was ever thinking of getting into the race, he’d be crazy to do so now. It’s over.

Indeed, even before the debate, Clinton’s numbers had stabilized. It began with Kevin McCarthy’s gaffe of the decade. That gave her a perpetual get-out-of-jail-free card that she adroitly deploys whenever the email issue arises. Her technique is flawless: a few meaningless phrases about having made a mistake, taking responsibility and being transparent, blah blah, followed by (I paraphrase) “but look at the larger picture, even Kevin McCarthy admits it’s a partisan witch hunt.” QED.

At the debate, Bernie Sanders sealed the deal with a thunderous “the American people are sick and tired of hearing about your damn emails.” That rendered the issue officially off-limits to all Democrats. File closed. End of story. Of course, it will be featured in the general election, but we’re talking here about her getting the nomination.

In gratuitously granting her absolution, Sanders garnered points for high-mindedness. But he’d already

cornered the high-mindedness market. Sanders was right to call this move dumb politics. His declaration simply and definitively conceded the race to Clinton. Leo Durocher said nice guys finish last. Sanders will finish second, which in this case is the same thing.

Clinton won the debate because it didn’t change the dynamic. It froze the race and she’s far in the lead. It doesn’t matter that her lead has shrunk from 50 points to 20. Twenty points is a landslide.

She remains a lousy candidate but she is an excellent debater — smart, quick, strategic and extremely practiced. Eight years ago she debated Barack Obama 25 times. Tuesday night, she successfully bobbed and weaved and pivoted. She was at her most impressive, however, when she whacked Sanders upside the head — twice — right out of the box. He didn’t know what hit him.

At the very start, she attacked from the left on gun control, from the right on capitalism. She simply said the magic words — small business, too? — and he beat an unsteady retreat. In general, Sanders was wild and wavy and loud and not very nimble. After all, how much practice do you get when for 35 years you’ve been campaigning as a social democrat in Vermont, America’s Denmark?

Sanders is good on an empty podium taking on invisible billionaires. Put him up against a Clinton and he’s lost.

He did make history of a sort, however. Every debate has its moment — the sound bite that lives forever (or until the next debate, whichever comes

first). His “damn emails” thunderbolt is the first such immortal line to be delivered by one candidate that seals victory for another.

The other three candidates hardly registered. Lincoln Chafee, currently polling at 0.3 points (minus-10 Celsius), played Ross Perot’s 1992 running mate, Adm. James Stockdale, who opened his vice presidential debate with: “Who am I? Why am I here?”

Democratic National Committee Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz came out a winner. She insisted, despite the squawking of Martin O’Malley and others, on no more than six debates. Who needs the other five? Tuesday night settled the issue. When there’s a knockout in the first round, you stop the fight.

This is not to say that by objective standards — i.e., against minimally competent competition — Clinton did so brilliantly. After all, to prepare the ground and pre-empt any attack from the left, she preceded the debate with a supremely cynical abandonment of

**She’s up against three ciphers and one endearing, gesticulating, slightly unmoored old man.**

both the Keystone XL pipeline and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which as secretary of state she’d pronounced “the gold standard” of trade deals.

It did smooth her debate night. But by so transparently compounding her inauthenticity problem, the flip-flops will cost her in the general elec-

tion.

But that’s for later. Right now, game over. Amid the playacting between today and Clinton’s coronation next summer, we can joyfully savor the most delightful moment of the debate, when we were reminded by Anderson Cooper that Sanders had honeymooned in the Soviet Union.

Springtime for Brezhnev in Yaroslavl. Attention: Mel Brooks.

## Seaside the winner in Hood to Coast accord

The Aug. 29 weather was frightful, with a windstorm that shut down the coast, but the runners persevered. I can only imagine what it was like for them trudging at midnight and later through mud, lightning and high winds, on mountain paths and farmers’ fields, and up and over that monumental engineering feat, the Roosevelt Drive overpass.

In Seaside, the beach was cordoned off because of the gusts and runners were funneled up Broadway. By late Saturday morning, the streets were crowded with race teams taking group selfies and comparing race times. Teams from 50 states and 39 countries participated in the annual 197-mile relay from Mount Hood to Seaside, bonding in what everyone we spoke with described as an unforgettable life experience. They were soaked through but exhilarated. They shared high-fives and hugged it out.

But what I saw as a journalist that day was not what many businesses in Seaside experienced.

Only a few weeks later, 74 merchants delivered a petition asking for a date change for the event. “Although the Seaside Chamber of Commerce and many of the area’s lodging facilities benefit financially, many of

## SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

By R.J. MARX



us year-round business owners feel that the overall impact of hosting this massive event during the busy summer tourist season is negative,” businesses wrote.

That number grew to 87 by the start of October. Complaints flowed about race organizers closing down streets, vendors setting up in front of stores, and a dearth of business from runners who had no interest in “shopping Seaside.”

These were people who were using Seaside as “a day-and-a-half destination and a party town.”

On Facebook, Seaside residents took to the message boards and layered criticism on the race: “Please send them packing. That’s what the citizens of Seaside want.”

The city’s love-hate relationship with Hood to Coast seems not so much like anything as a marriage, in this case, a 25-year relationship. For a sense of the historic dynamic, I went back to the archives.

“Most of these runners are adventurers,” wrote the Seaside Signal’s sports editor in 1991. “Not even the winners reap monetary rewards. These die-hards run this purely for fun. For the camaraderie along the route. For the beautiful and inviting Oregon scenery. Rest up and we’ll look for you next year.”

Five years later, crowd control, traffic and safety concerns led to a proposed race ban in 1996.

It was kisses again in 2000. “Welcome Hood to Coast!” read a banner headline.

“Hood to Coast gets ultimatum,” I read in 2005.

In 2007, the newspaper ran a local and toll-free complaint line.

“Area braces for Hood to Coast,” warned the 2010 headline.

Variations on this theme have continued on and off for the past five years, with more breakup rumors than Kanye and Kim.

This year, Seaside and Hood to Coast came to the brink of ending it all.

But like a broken marriage, there would have been fallout, in this case, blows to our health system, city parks and potentially the tourism dollars this city depends on.

And there is the race’s international cachet: Hood to Coast is perhaps the only time a visitor from Bonn, Paris, Ankara or Sydney may ever hear of Seaside.

R.J. Marx is the *South County* reporter for *The Daily Astorian* and the editor of the *Seaside Signal* and *Cannon Beach Gazette*.